

THE PRAXIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY: ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE, THE POLITICS OF
CIVILITY, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

Peter C. Weber

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Gregory R. Witkowski, Ph.D., Chair

Dwight F. Burlingame, Ph.D.

Doctoral Committee

Kevin Cramer, Ph.D.

January 29, 2014

Leslie Lenkowsky, Ph.D.

Giuliana Gemelli, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

For Sindhuchen.

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This dissertation analyzes the efforts to develop a pluralistic political culture and democratic practices of governance through the training of democratic leaders in Germany's first school of public affairs, the German School of Politics. The investigation of the thought-leaders that formed this school illustrates two main points. First, through the prism of the School, I detail the efforts to develop a conception of civil society that, by being grounded in civility, could retie social bonds and counter the brutalization of politics characteristic of the post-World War One years. By providing practical knowledge, courses in public affairs could not only free Germans from the blinders of ideologies, but also instill in them an ethos that would help viewing the political enemy as an opponent with an equal right to participate in the political process. Secondly, I point to the limits of trans-national philanthropy in supporting the development of civil society in young democracies. By analyzing the relationship between U.S. foundations and the School, I focus on the asymmetry that existed between American ideals of democracy and the realities of the German political system. This study thus focuses on the dynamics between the actions of institutions and organizations, and the broader social behaviors that constitute public life.

Gregory R. Witkowski, Ph.D., Chair

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ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

Antibolschewistische Liga	Anti-Bolshevist League
Arbeitsausschuss für Mitteleuropa	Working Committee for Central Europe
Aufklärungsdienst in der Heimat	Intelligence Service for the Homeland
Auslandsdeutsche	Germans living abroad
Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, or Kulturbund	Union of German Scholars and Artists
Burgfrieden	Civic Peace
Bürgerliche Gesellschaft	Civil society or bourgeois society
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace	CEIP
Deutsche Demokratische Partei	German Democratic Party, or DDP
Deutsche Hochschule für Politik	German School of Politics, or DHfP
Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund	German League for the League of Nations
Deutsche Volkspartei	German People's Party, or DVP
Deutschnationale Volkspartei	German National People's Party, or DNVP
Deutscher Herrenklub Club	German Gentlemen's
École libre des sciences politiques	Free College for Political Science

Generalsekretariat zum Studium und zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus	General Secretariat for the Study and Fight of Bolshevism
Großdeutschland	Greater-Germany
Hochschule für nationale Politik Politics	College of National
Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial	LSRM
Kulturpolitik	Cultural and educational policy
Mitteleuropa	Central Europe
Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei	National Socialist German Workers' Party, or NSDAP
Persönlichkeit	Person of influence or importance
Politische Kolleg	Political College, or PK
Rockefeller Foundation	RF
Social Democratic Party	SPD
Sonderweg	Special Path
Staatsbürgerschule	Citizens School
Überparteilichkeit	Being above the parties, or nonpartisanship
Vernunftrepublikaner	Republicans of Reason
Volk	People or Nation

Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland, or Volksbund

National Union for
Freedom and
Fatherland

Volksgemeinschaft

People's Community

Werkbund

German Association
of Craftsmen

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Weimar Republic is a paradigmatic case of young democracies' difficulties to transcend their authoritarian pasts and to set foot in societies with allegedly weak democratic traditions. Scholars have traditionally used the Weimar Republic in asymmetric comparisons aiming to analyze the challenges facing societies while transitioning from authoritarian to democratic systems of government.¹ Indeed, the Weimar experience may point to the uneven path to democracy in long-term analyses that view post-1945 Germany as the result of a long historical process started at the turn of the twentieth century. Conversely, Germany's first democracy may also confirm the fears of the "ballot democracy" with the electoral successes of Adolf Hitler's National Socialist Party.

For scholars of civil society, the case of the Weimar Republic is of relevance because it provides a vantage point for the study of civil society in the context of young democracies and in the processes of democratization. Scholars who normatively define civil society see confirmed the interdependence of civil society and democratic forms of governance in the case of Weimar,² whereas scholars who root civil society in associational life may view the Weimar Republic as a classical example of civil society's democratic "neutrality."³ Germany's first democracy is therefore a fertile ground for investigations of civil society's role in modern societies.

¹ See for example Sheri Berman, "The Promise of the Arab Spring," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 92, no. 1 (2013).

² Bernd Reiter, "Civil Society and Democracy: Weimar Reconsidered," *Journal of Civil Society*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2009), 21-34.

³ Sheri Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," *World Politics*, vol. 49, no. 3 (1997), 401-429 and Omar G. Encarnación, "Tocqueville's Missionaries. Civil Society Advocacy and Promotion of Democracy," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2000), 9-18.

German intellectual elites beheld with angst the collapse of the authoritarian state in the fall of 1918 and the communist uprisings in the winter of 1918-19. Nonetheless, the crisis of the times radically broke with the past and spurred critical analyses of the social, economic, and political causes of the crisis. Hence, it opened possibilities of action projected into the future. The crisis of the times heightened the sense of individual responsibility toward the community. In this sense, the crisis became a critical historical juncture that allowed for conceptualizations of new forms of societal organization. Conceptions of civil society offered the theoretical means to bridge individual and societal spheres of action and hence guide non-state activities that aimed to influence and – ultimately – mold society. German public intellectuals thus offer a fruitful vantage point for the investigation of social actions for the good of the commonality.

The intellectuals at the center of this study did not remain isolated in the cloudy world of abstract ideology. Rather, they actively participated in public debates and aimed to influence public policy by using extra-political avenues such as political clubs, associations, press, and educational institutes. Education was at the core of their efforts to shape socio-political transformations. Intellectual elites had to address key questions such as the transformation of the individual into a citizen, the emergence of a pluralistic public opinion, and the tense relationship between private interest and the common good in a modern society. Political education thus gave both liberal and conservative intellectuals the possibility to influence social developments and transform contrasting forms of societal organization into reality.

These intellectuals' pragmatic and practical approach led them to focus on the praxis of civil society. They aimed to develop a democratic political culture and

democratic practices of governance through the training of democratic leaders in Germany's first school of public policy and public affairs, the German School of Politics (*Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*). The development of this school in the 1920s and its leadership's efforts to influence public policy serve as an example of one of the most promising attempts to establish a civil society during Germany's first democracy. I analyze these efforts against the background of the rise to power of the Nazis.

American philanthropic foundations supported the German School of Politics because they viewed it as a democratic stronghold amid Germany's radicalized public sphere. The efforts of American philanthropy to create a global civil society through a network of research institutes and to foster the development of German, democratic political sciences, however, clashed against the goals of Germany's public intellectuals. The analysis of this relationship therefore serves as a case study for an understanding of the asymmetries that developed between American ideals of democracy and the realities of Weimar's political system and its political culture, and hence questions the role of trans-national philanthropy in support of democracy and civil society.

This study focuses on the praxis of civil society. In so doing, it closes the gap between theory and empirical analyses that characterizes much of the scholarship in civil society studies. In the aftermath of the war, liberal intellectuals grounded civil society in the "politics of civility," and hence conceptualized a form of societal organization that recognized and accepted the intrinsic socio-political conflicts of modern societies. This study, however, also shows how during the Weimar Republic a conceptualization of civil society rooted in the acceptance of conflict and based on the notion of civility paved the path to a very different conception of societal organization under the Nazis. It therefore

points to the weakness of the civil society project in preserving and defending democratic institutions against powerful political alternatives.

The Civil Society Debate

At regular intervals, academic debates intersect broader public debates. On these occasions, social, economic, or political concepts find a broad resonance outside the academic ivory tower, shape public discourse, and influence society's self-perception. In recent decades, no other political concept has met civil society's same, unmatched success in both the scholarly literature and public debates. Civil society has become an ubiquitous concept in today's public debates, whether conceptualized as a form of resistance against authoritarian regimes or as an utopian answer to intellectuals' growing anxiety about the transformation of their post-modern democratic societies.

From a broad perspective, two main approaches characterize civil society studies. The theoretical complexity of civil society spurred numerous investigations of civil society as part of intellectual history. These studies provide a better understanding of how intellectuals have used the concept of civil society to analyze the socio-political transformations of their societies. Hence, from a theoretical level, scholars point out the relationship between societal transformations and the shifting conceptualizations of civil society.⁴ Conversely, scholars have tried to capture and describe the empirical dimension of civil society through quantitative, qualitative, and historical approaches. Unless loosely defined and equated to associational life, however, scholars have struggled in applying a multilayered political concept to empirical analyses.

In this study, I focus on the praxis of civil society. Accordingly, I move away from attempts to identify civil society with a specific social class or social structure as

⁴ See the excellent Peter Wagner, ed., *The Languages of Civil Society* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006).

well as from debates focusing on the dichotomy of good/bad associational life. In fact, civil society cannot be reduced to simple self-organization, as civil society allows differences and accepts and encourages them within limits. Consequentially, I view civil society as part of an ongoing debate over the ways modern individuals (that is, economically as well as politically independent and self-interested individuals) participate in public affairs and still identify with the common good.

Civil Society in Theory: State, Associational Life, and Democracy

As a political concept, civil society cannot be decoupled from the notion of “modernity” and from the perception of “crisis” and anxiety. Rapid societal transformations radically altered individuals’ relationship with the broader social-political world at the turn of the eighteenth century. Intellectuals found an answer to the worrisome societal transformations they were observing in civil society. The emergence of commercial society and the French Revolution signaled the end of the *Ancien Régime* and freed the individual from those social structures that had guided (and constrained) human action. Without social as well as political structures regulating political participation in traditional societies, intellectuals sought new social and organizational principles able to balance the relationship between individual and society in an era of rapid individuation.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel opened the modern debate on civil society by conceptually separating civil society and political society at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Before and after Hegel, however, all major civil society theorists have addressed the tension between private interest and the public good. These debates have focused on the kind of social individuals, social interactions, and organizations needed to

establish, maintain, or reinforce a liberal state. In other words, these theorists were concerned with the ways self-interested men could participate in public debates over political matters and still identify with the common good. The different solutions to this debate provide a useful framework for this study's conceptualization of civil society, and help the understanding of Weimar's tragic fate.

In ancient Greece and Rome, scholars equated civil society to political society (hence, not recognizing forms of resistance against political power). The historical roots of the modern concept of civil society can be traced back to the Middle Ages. In West Europe, the competition between spiritual and secular centers of power, the emergence of the feudal system, and the existence of communes and cities with their privileges established some structural limits to centralizing nuclei of power. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the emergence of the absolute state and natural law led theorists to find new ways to challenge the legitimacy of traditional sources of political authority. John Locke juxtaposed civil society to a state of nature. In contrast, however, to the devastation pictured by Thomas Hobbes, Locke argued that society existed before government and thus was formed by the enjoyment of natural rights (property) granted by God. Spiritual or political authority therefore could not limit society, which Locke conceived as pre-political or extra-political and rooted in economic relationships.⁵

The American and French revolutions significantly changed the framework of the civil society discourse. The juxtaposition between state of nature and political (civil) society had responded to the need of conceptualizing the possibilities of resistance to political authority. The dramatic enlargement of the polity following the democratic

⁵ John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*, edited by C. B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980).

revolutions shifted the focus on ways in which expanded political participation could be integrated, mediated, and transferred to political institutions without threatening political as well social stability.⁶ Consequentially, intellectuals sought solutions to the tension between private interest and the common good in modern societies. These theorists alternatively pointed to the ability either of intermediate institutions (most notably voluntary associations) or of the authority of the state to tame their societies' sociopolitical conflicts.

Hegel's conception evolved in response to the French Revolution, which in his view had delegitimized the contractual notion of government and demonstrated the fallacy of the principle of individual will. In civil society, he asserted, persons were connected in a developed totality through a "system of wants," where the division of labor "limit[s] each person to a single kind of technical skills, and thus produce[s] more unconditional dependence on the social system."⁷ Nonetheless, the individual would constantly and inevitably fall for egoistic self-interests, thus risking to tear apart society. Only the state and an impartial cast of professional bureaucrats could achieve the unity of civil society and of an abstract public interest. Through constitutional law, the state "protects the family and guides civil society," acting as a mediator between particular interests and universal will. In short, Hegel concluded, the state had to ensure that civil society would remain civil.⁸

By blending citizen and bourgeois, classical republicanism had traditionally emphasized the convergence of political participation and economic self-interest in the

⁶ Jean Terrier and Peter Wagner, "Civil Society and the *Problématique* of Political Modernity," in *The Languages of Civil Society*, edited by Peter Wagner (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 9-27.

⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Moral Life, or Social Ethics* (1830), in *Nineteenth Century Europe. Liberalism and Its Critics*, edited by Jan Goldstein and John W. Boyer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 133.

⁸ Hegel, *The Moral Life, or Social Ethics*, in *Nineteenth Century Europe*, 138-149.

ideal independent man. By contrast, Karl Marx shifted the emphasis to economic self-interest. Under capitalism, he contended, civil society would become a sphere of freedom for few based on the exclusion of many. The French Revolution dissolved the old civil society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) but granted only a limited degree of freedom. Simultaneously, the individual suffered a split of identity: man, as abstract citizen in politics, was separated from man as an egoistic and materialistic individual in civil society. According to Marx, full human emancipation required the overcoming of this separation and the recognition of personal forces as social forces.⁹ In a materialistic vision of history, the division of labor implied an unequal distribution among individuals of material and spiritual activities as well as “of labour and its products, hence property,” produced a “cleavage ... between particular and common interest,” and (out of this contradiction) forms the state. However, the state was only “illusory communal life ... in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among each other.”¹⁰ The proletariat – “a class in civil society which is not a class of civil society” – historically can represent the whole society, bring forward universal human emancipation and hence successfully carry out the revolution. The revolution was possible when its objective conditions were at hand and the proletariat, in order to develop its “universal character,” would take consciousness of itself and of its history.¹¹

Hegel had emphasized the state’s role in protecting civil society from falling apart under the pressure of a multiplicity of particular interests. The state thus embodied the abstract

⁹ Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (1843), in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton & Company, 1972), 26-52.

¹⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology: Part I* (1845-46), in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 159 and 160.

¹¹ Karl Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction* (1844), in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 62-65.

common good in which liberty and freedom could, and would, be fully achieved. By contrast, the Marxist tradition viewed civil society as the locus where the relationship of productive forces that characterizes the capitalist system developed. In both case, the focus on the state was central to these conceptualizations, as either the idealistic objectivation of the common good or the body of coercive economic (and, hence, political) dominance that must be overthrown.

The realities of the American experience shaped the reception of classical republicanism and liberal Enlightenment on the other extreme of the theoretical debate of civil society. Alexander Hamilton dismissed the common belief that a republican form of government could only be realized in small states.¹² Consequently, James Madison advanced a pragmatic solution to the limits of classical republicanism in *Federalist No. 10*. In order to contain factionalism and in the impossibility to address its causes, Madison argued that only large nations could possibly control the effects of factionalism, thus criticizing classical republicanism's emphasis on small republics. The multitude of factions in large countries – Madison notably concluded – would automatically neutralize the disrupting influence of factionalism on society and balance the political system.¹³

Like Madison, Tocqueville also recognized the dangers of factions. Associations were not only voluntary and publicly oriented, but their actions were also driven by “certain manners.” In contrast to America, European organizations developed as

¹² Publius [Alexander Hamilton], *The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection* (Federalist No. 9).

¹³ Publius [James Madison], *The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection, Continued* (Federalist No. 10). Madison's argument mirrored Adam Smith's assertion on the role of religious sects in society. As a reaction to religious wars, theorists advocated a clear separation of politics from religion and the need for a distinctive private sphere, where religious differences had to be relegated. Adam Smith argued that religious zeal was dangerous if only a few big sects existed in society and hence suggested that only the existence of many small sects could ensure that none would dominate. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nation*, introduction by Allan B. Krueger (New York: Bantam Classics, 2003), 995-1028.

“weapons” for political conflict.¹⁴ From a political perspective, Tocqueville discussed associations in relation to the tensions between majority and minority. He contended that universal suffrage mitigated the “excesses of political association” in America because “no party can reasonably claim to represent those who have not voted at all.”¹⁵ While civil associations facilitated political associations because men become familiar in the former with “the principle of association,” they came together in great numbers only in political associations. Therefore, men learned to “subordinate to the common action” in political associations. Associations ensured the equilibrium of society by balancing the individualist tendencies of democracy, and hence they could be considered “schools of democracy.”¹⁶ Tocqueville equated civil society with the sphere of voluntary associations in which self-interested individuals could learn to compromise. Associations would teach members to mediate between different interests and therefore to restrain their egoistical self-interests. Associations provided those levels of civility – “self-interest properly understood” – that would keep democracies from being torn apart by individualism.

In Europe, Emile Durkheim renewed the attention to intermediary institutions and the role in guaranteeing the equilibrium of modern societies at the end of the nineteenth century. Durkheim investigated the intrinsic problem of modern industrialized societies, that is, the tensions between individual freedom and the social bonds necessary for the survival of the system. Solidarity was the affective and psychological bond that tied the individual to the social group.¹⁷ The French sociologist, however, was aware that organic

¹⁴ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, edited by J. P. Mayer (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006), 193-195.

¹⁵ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 194.

¹⁶ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 522.

¹⁷ Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, with an introduction by Lewis Coser (New York: The Free University, 1997). In mechanical solidarity “the ideas and tendencies common to all members of society exceed in number and intensity those that appertain personally to each one of those members” (85);

solidarity was extremely labile and that the division of labor could produce “different or even opposite” results. Durkheim contended that intermediary institutions must create equilibrium and prevent the atomization that a market society might create because state and family could not support the moral integration of the individual in industrialized societies. Organic solidarity could prevent anomie from emerging because it integrated the individual in the social group.¹⁸

The distinct role of state and intermediary institutions in conceptualizations of civil society points to different forms of relationship between civil society and democracy. The centrality of the state in the Hegelian tradition reflects the mistrust in society’s ability to self-regulate and to balance individualizing self-interest and the good of the broader community. Conversely, the Tocquevillian tradition of civil society deems voluntary associations able to negotiate the contrasting and competing interests of modern societies and hence to educate the individual to the life in common. These two traditions inspire and shape the contemporary debate on civil society’s relationship with democracy.

it is a solidarity characteristic of pre-industrial societies, mechanic and with no room for the individual, which “is zero.” Every individual is determined – through coercion (repressive law) – by collective tendencies and beliefs. In modern industrialized societies, as a consequence of the division of labor, every individual has a peculiar “sphere of action” and consequentially a “personality.” Through a biological analogy, Durkheim compares organic solidarity with the organism of “higher animals,” where “each organ has its own special characteristics and autonomy, yet the greater the unity of the organism, the more marked the individualization of the parts” (89). Individual and society are thus inversely related.

¹⁸ In mechanical solidarity “the ideas and tendencies common to all members of society exceed in number and intensity those that appertain personally to each one of those members” (85); it is a solidarity characteristic of pre-industrial societies, mechanic and with no room for the individual, which “is zero.” Every individual is determined – through coercion (repressive law) – by collective tendencies and beliefs. In modern industrialized societies, as a consequence of the division of labor, every individual has a peculiar “sphere of action” and consequentially a “personality.” Through a biological analogy, Durkheim compares organic solidarity with the organism of “higher animals,” where “each organ has its own special characteristics and autonomy, yet the greater the unity of the organism, the more marked the individualization of the parts” (89). Individual and society are thus inversely related. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, 291-294 and 304-308.

Anticipating a theme that the “Putnam school” would later popularize, mass society critics had already explained the demise of the Weimar Republic in Tocquevillian terms in the 1950s. By drawing on Durkheim, Hannah Arendt and William Kornhauser argued that mass society had broken the connections between individuals and estranged citizens. The collapse of intermediary associations had left the individual without links in society, and this anomic individual eventually became the disillusioned elector of the National Socialist party.¹⁹ In so doing, mass society critics contributed to establish the neo-Tocquevillian orthodoxy of directly linking voluntary associations to democracy, hence seeing the cause of Weimar Republic’s collapse in a weak – or non-existent – civil society.

Inspired by Tocqueville and Durkheim, scholars see the social embodiment of the civil society ideal in associational life. Accordingly, they view civil society as *part* of society in the form of voluntary associations.²⁰ Scholars have found the precondition for democracy in associational networks by attributing civil society’s normative dimension to associations, as Robert Putnam posited in his bestselling academic works, *Making Democracy Work* and *Bowling Alone*.²¹ In what has become the orthodoxy of civil society studies, voluntary associations allegedly provide venues for social interaction free of the constraints to human action that characterize traditional societies by breaking the exclusivity of ascribed identities.

¹⁹ William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1959) and Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973). See also Irene Taviss Thomson, “The Theory That Won’t Die: From Mass Society to the Decline of Social Capital,” *Sociological Forum*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2005), 421-448.

²⁰ For the distinction between civil society as a part and as a kind of society see Michael Edwards, *Civil Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004).

²¹ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001) and Robert T. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

The direct relationship between associational networks and liberal democracy causes conceptual problems. The so-called “mediating approaches” focus on the indirect benefits that voluntary associations “produce.” It is, however, doubtful whether and why a certain mode of action developed in one sphere of society should be automatically transmitted to the entire social as well as political world. These approaches therefore are based on the criticizable assumption that a “transmission belt” exists between voluntary self-organization and broader political action.²² Conversely, some scholars have emphasized the negative effects of certain organizations on democracy. Scholars have excluded from the civil society realm several types of associations such as hate groups and mafia-kind organizations in order to maintain the positive relationship between associational life and healthy democracy. Authors have thus coined the antinomy “bad civil society.”²³ Consequentially, scholars point out the critical role of the political framework within which associational life develops and unfolds.²⁴

Differences notwithstanding, these “bad” groups share several features that challenge current conceptualizations of civil society.²⁵ Scholars have pointed to the negative externalities that some forms of social capital may produce for society at large.²⁶ Putnam thus introduced the distinction between bonding social capital and bridging social capital to pinpoint associational life’s positive and negative effects on society. While

²² Nancy L. Rosenblum, *Membership and Morals. The Personal Uses of Pluralism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 47-48.

²³ Simone Chambers and Jeffrey Kopstein, “Bad Civil Society,” *Political Theory*, vol. 29, no. 6 (2001), 837-865.

²⁴ Sheri Berman, “Civil Society and Political Institutionalism,” *The American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 40, no. 5 (1997), 562-574.

²⁵ Jane Schneider and Peter Schneider, “The Mafia and al-Qaeda: Violent and Secretive Organizations in Comparative and Historical Perspective,” *American Anthropologist*, vol. 104, no. 3 (2002), 776-782.

²⁶ See Francis Fukuyama, “Social Capital and Civil Society,” *IMF Working Papers*, no. 00/74 (2000) and Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt, “The Downside of Social Capital,” *The American Prospect*, vol. 26 (1996), 18-21.

bonding social capital is inward looking and strengthen exclusive ties and homogeneous groups, bridging social capital is outward looking and establishes connections across social, ethnic, and religious divides.²⁷ This distinction therefore allows scholars to distinguish between voluntary associations' positive and negative externalities, and thus points to the multifaceted impact of social bonds on forms of societal organization.

The notion of bad civil society, however, reduces civil society to associational life and, at the same time, deprives voluntary associations of their intrinsic positive effects on democracy. Tocqueville had focused on associational life but also had maintained that membership in associations had positive side-effects, namely the formation of a “self-interest properly understood.” Scholars have legitimately criticized the notion that a congruence exists between the internal life of voluntary organizations and democratic practices of governance. Nonetheless, they describe the existence of “bad” associations rather than of “bad” civil society by using the antinomy “bad civil society.” A positive connotation is, by definition, associated with civil society, and these critics correctly dismiss the intrinsic positiveness of associational life as a myth but then erroneously equate civil society and associational life, hence transferring their criticism of associations to civil society in general.

Furthermore, theoretical tensions partially undermine the usefulness of the concept of social capital, and of the distinction between its bonding and bridging form. Scholars have pointed to the theoretical contradictions that are rooted in Putnam's adaptation of a sociological concept that had been developed for an individual level of

²⁷ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 21-24.

analysis to a collective one.²⁸ Undoubtedly, Putnam has the merit to draw attention to the social bonds that undergird the good working of democratic societies. The distinction between bonding and bridging social capital is, however, not sufficiently clear, as Mafia-kind organizations may for example cooperate with Russian organized-crime societies, thus also relying on a form of bridging social capital.²⁹

Conversely, the focus on political institutions points to the state's key role in supporting civil society and creating the framework for its development. In most conceptualizations, however, this approach assigns a neutral role to civil society, deprives it of its normative value, and links the stability of democratic systems to the strength of their political institutions. In so doing, these scholars paradoxically "close the circle" and renew the attention to the structural preconditions for democracy, which civil society research had originally aspired to complement. Indeed, the civil society debate draws attention to the societal dynamics our political societies are rooted in. In fact, the focus on civil society had been both the cause and the symptom of changed interpretative frameworks guiding the analysis of the relationship between state and forms of societal organization. Traditionally, scholars had evaluated states' stability and performance by their level of provision of "political goods." Hence, they made the collapse and failure of a state dependent on its ability to perform certain functions (functional dimension) and to maintain an institutional framework (structural dimension).³⁰ The civil society debate

²⁸ Bob Edwards and Michael W. Foley, "Beyond Tocqueville: Civil society and social capital in comparative perspective," *The American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 42, no. 1 (1998), 5-20 and Alejandro Portes, "The Two Meanings of Social Capital," *Sociological Forum*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2000), 1-12.

²⁹ Amitai Etzioni, "Review: Is Bowling Together Sociologically Lite?" *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 30, no. 3 (2001), 223-224.

³⁰ Annette Zimmer and Matthias Freise, "Bringing Society Back: Civil Society, Social Capital, and Third Sector," in *Civil Society and Governance in Europe: From National to International Linkages*, edited by William A. Maloney and Jan W. van Deth (Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2008), 19-44 and Elizabeth S. Clemens, "The Constitution of Citizens: Political Theories of Nonprofit Organizations," in *The*

calls attention to those societal dynamics that contribute to the establishment, maintaining, and strengthening of democratic states.

The theoretical debates on civil society stress civil society's nuanced and multilayered conceptual legacy. Theorists viewed civil society as an answer to the problems they observed in rapidly modernizing societies, which appeared to break the established equilibrium between private interest and the common good. In these conceptualizations, civil society always had a positive connotation because it embodied a form of societal organization that was able to address the challenges of transformed societies. Scholars, however, have struggled in applying such a normatively loaded concept to empirical analyses. The challenge for civil society studies is therefore to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Civil society in Practice: Associational Life and the Weimar Republic

Scholars have developed numerous master narratives detailing the failure of the Weimar Republic. These analyses have often overlapped with the broader debate on civil society and its relationship with democracy. These studies, however, have not used civil society theory to understand the demise of Germany's first democracy, even in the few cases in which they have explicitly used a civil society terminology. The debates on the failure of the Weimar Republic therefore tend to reflect (and epitomize) the general weakness of civil society studies and fail to close the gap between theory and empirical analysis.

Nonprofit Sector. A Research Handbook, 2nd ed., edited by Richard Steinberg and Walter W. Powell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 207-220. See also Robert I. Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) and Jennifer Milliken and Keith Krause, "State Failure, State Collapse, and State Reconstruction: Concepts, Lessons and Strategies," *Development and Change*, vol. 33, no. 5 (2002), 753-774.

An influential line of research described the collapse of the Weimar Republic as the outcome of a peculiar German historical development. The *Sonderweg* (special path) thesis investigated the long-term causes of the Nazi regime by detailing the divergence of the German path from the averred Anglo-Saxon normality.³¹ These studies emphasized the ways a traditional society reacted to the socio-economic and political-structural transformations of Imperial Germany. The supporters of the *Sonderweg* thesis explicitly linked the weakness of Germany's democratic tradition (and hence Weimar's doomed fate) to the weakness of Germany's middle classes and their associations.³² In particular, they viewed the failure of the bourgeois revolution of 1848 as the starting point of Germany's peculiar historical development.³³ In so doing, they linked the weakness of a German democratic tradition to the weakness of Germany's *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (an ambiguous German expression meaning both "civil society" and "bourgeois society").

A cohort of Anglo-Saxon historians – in particular Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn – criticized the *Sonderweg* paradigm. Scholars empirically detailed the emergence of a bourgeois culture in Imperial Germany and stressed the theoretical

³¹ The sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf and the historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler laid the bases for the *Sonderweg* thesis in two seminal works. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (New York: Norton & Company, 1979 [1965]) and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918* (New York: Berg, 1985 [1973]).

³² Emblematically, Dahrendorf had related his work to Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Dahrendorf stated that his goal was to analyze the reasons why democracy did not set foot in Germany, whereas the French nobleman had described why democracy blossomed in America. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany*, 14-15.

³³ More in general, the *Sonderweg* thesis rested on a set of political (nation-building from above, limited parliamentarism, and weak party system during the Empire), cultural (survival of traditional feudal, military, and cultural elites) and social factors (the weakness of the middle classes). Good reviews in Robert G. Möller, "The Kaiserreich Recast? Continuity and Change in Modern German Historiography," *Journal of Social History*, vol. 17, no. 4 (1984), 655-683 and Jürgen Kocka, "German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German Sonderweg," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1988), 3-16.

inconsistency of a “normal” path to modernity.³⁴ As a result, historians have investigated middle classes’ development, associational life, and political culture. Two broad research endeavors – the Bielefeld Project and the Frankfurt Project – proposed competing definitions of the German middle classes. Nonetheless, both research projects drew attention to the significant societal changes in the decades preceding World War One.³⁵ In fact, the late nineteenth-century associational boom challenged traditional moral imperatives because new associations allegedly gave voice to particular interests and to previously marginalized groups.³⁶ These transformations heightened the appeal of radical nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century.³⁷

Controversially, however, these scholars entangled the history of the middle classes and the development of civil society. In fact, they investigated civil society as part of real historical transformations in the context of the history of the middle classes and their associations. Hence, these historians have associated a particular segment of society with the ideological underpinnings of a normative concept.³⁸ As an ideology or doctrine related to democracy, scholars who identify civil society with an empirical part of society

³⁴ David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: bourgeois society and politics in nineteenth-century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

³⁵ Good reviews in Jonathan Sperber, “*Bürgertum, Bürgerlichkeit, Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*: Studies of the German (Upper) Middle Class and Its Sociocultural World,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 69, no. 2 (1997), 271-297 and Utz Haltern, “Die Gesellschaft der Bürger,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 19, no. 1 (1993), 100-134.

³⁶ See Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, “Democracy and Associations in the Long Nineteenth Century: Toward a Transnational Perspective,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 75, no. 2 (2003), 269-299, Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Civil Society* (New York: Pelgrave MacMillan, 2006), and Jürgen Kocka, “The Middle Classes in Europe,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 67, no. 4 (1995), 783-806.

³⁷ Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right. Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991).

³⁸ Playing on the ambiguity of the German word “Bürger” (meaning both citizen and bourgeois), Jürgen Kocka argues that the histories of civil society and of middle classes (*Bürgertum*) are profoundly entangled until the half of the nineteenth century and then slowly diverged. Nonetheless, he concludes that the parallel decline of the *Bürgertum* and the disappearance of civil society by the late nineteenth century support the link between civil society and middle classes. See Jürgen Kocka, *Civil Society and Dictatorship in Modern German History* (Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2010), chapter 2.

such as the middle class situate these social groups at the center of a democratic political system and thus hand them a crucial function in the establishment of the system itself.³⁹ With few exceptions, therefore, historians who have used the concept of civil society have fallen short of closing the gap between theory and empirical reality.⁴⁰

Drawing on this broad empirical literature, Sheri Berman argues that associational life in nineteenth-century Germany developed in reaction to the inability or unwillingness of political institutions to address citizens' needs. Germany's dense network of associations provided Nazi activists with organizational skills and, at the same time, allowed the National Socialist Party to penetrate all sectors of society. Berman suggests that civil society might become an alternative to politics in the presence of weak political structures and institutions and, by potentially deepening social cleavages, risks undermining the stability of democratic regimes.⁴¹ Other scholars have adopted a similar perspective and linked the emergence of fascism in inter-war Europe to the tension resulting from voluntary associations' pressures for democracy on relatively closed and authoritarian political institutions.⁴²

Berman's work had a far-reaching influence on the broader field of civil society studies. By debunking the Tocquevillian myth of the intrinsic positiveness of associational life, Berman restates the centrality of political institutions over associational

³⁹ Thomas H. Broman, "Introduction: Some Preliminary Considerations on Science and Civil Society," *Osiris*, 2nd Series, vol. 17 (2002), 4-5.

⁴⁰ Although pointing out these limitations, Frank Trentmann and the contributors to his edited volume have also fallen short of closing the gap between theory and historical research. Frank Trentmann, ed., *Paradoxes of Civil Society. New Perspectives on Modern German and British History*, rev. ed. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003).

⁴¹ Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," 401-429.

⁴² Dylan Riley, *The Civic Foundations of Fascism: Italy, Spain and Romania, 1870-1945* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010).

dynamics in the context of societal transformations and processes of democratization.⁴³ In so doing, however, Berman downgrades civil society to a neutral social structure that gains its significance from the surrounding political system. Paradoxically, therefore, Berman strips associational life of its normative dimension and consequentially equated civil society with associational life without its positive functions, which had justified the identification of civil society and voluntary associations.

As a result, Berman – perhaps unwillingly – reopened a debate on the “right” nature of civil society organizations. Bernd Reiter, for example, contests Berman’s argument and criticizes the shift in focus from civil society to political institutions. By viewing Prussian militarism as the main feature first of Imperial Germany and later of the Weimar Republic, Reiter contends that a strong anti-democratic and militaristic approach characterized Weimar’s civic associations.⁴⁴ Similarly, Frank Bösch argues that associational life increasingly fostered a “militant sociability” (*militante Geselligkeit*) under the influence of the German Revolution and the Versailles Treaty during the 1920s. Militant sociability played a crucial role in the development of a bourgeois associational life, and was associated with masculinity and used as a substitute for military service.⁴⁵

Undoubtedly, these studies have the merit to offer a more nuanced understanding of associational dynamics and to warn against overly optimistic Tocquevillian notions of

⁴³ See also Berman, “Civil Society and Political Institutionalism,” 562-574.

⁴⁴ Bernd Reiter, “Civil Society and Democracy: Weimar Reconsidered,” *Journal of Civil Society*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2009), 21-34.

⁴⁵ Frank Bösch, “Militante Geselligkeit. Formierungsformen der bürgerlichen Vereinswelt zwischen Revolution und Nationalsozialismus,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sonderheft*, vol. 21 (2005), 158-166. Other authors have stressed the violent nature of conservative middle class organizations. See Sven Reichardt, “Gewalt, Körper, Politik. Paradoxien in der deutschen Kulturgeschichte der Zwischenkriegszeit,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sonderheft*, vol. 21 (2005), 205-239 and Bernd Weisbrod, “The Crisis of Bourgeois Society in Interwar Germany,” in *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: Comparisons and Contrasts*, edited by Richard Bessel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 23-39.

civil society. By focusing on associational structures, their outlook, and their relation to political institutions, however, these scholars tend to equate civil society with associational life. In the case of Berman, this equation leads to a dropping of the “civil” in favor of the socio-political structure. By contrast, scholars emphasizing the “nature” of associations establish (artificial) criteria of exclusion, which often are based more on the rhetoric than on the practice of violence.⁴⁶ Like the theoretical approaches to civil society, these studies fall short of closing the gap between theoretical conceptualizations and empirical realities. In particular, these scholars have not analyzed the complex processes by which German elites developed alternative and contrasting forms of societal organizations, which gradually rejected the liberal balance between democracy, individualism, and associational life.

In this study, I analyze civil society beyond the relationship to associational life and institutional framework. Considering civil society part of a debate over the tensions between private interest and the common good blurs the lines between democratic and undemocratic solutions. In fact, the complexity of the Weimar Republic stems from the difficulty of juxtaposing different forms of societal organization on the basis of their democratic/undemocratic character. The specific social context of Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic led contemporaries to analyze – and perhaps exaggerate – the tension between private interest and the common good. The inability of conceptually as well as practically solving this tension eventually contributed to tearing apart Weimar society. Civil society, a product of modernity, paved the path in the 1920s to the

⁴⁶ Benjamin Ziemann, “Germany after the First World War – A Violent Society? Results and Implications of Recent Research on Weimar Germany,” *Journal of Modern European History*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2003), 80-95.

homogenizing project of the “people’s community” (*Volksgemeinschaft*), the pathological product of modernity.

The Praxis of Civil Society

In this study, I draw on Detlev Peukert’s influential analysis of the Weimar Republic. Peukert decoupled the notion of progress from the concept of modernity, and hence examined the modernity of the Weimar Republic from the perspective of a modern understanding of the human condition. Peukert described the Weimar years as a “crisis of classical modernity” and National Socialism as one possible outcome of the “pathologies of modernity.”⁴⁷ Hence, he gave the Weimar Republic its autonomous place in German history despite its short history. Furthermore, Peukert’s work pointed to the need to analyze the ambiguity of modernity, to focus on the tension between contrasting solutions to the crisis of modernity, and to challenge conventional narratives of crisis and inject a sense of contingency into the picture of the Weimar Republic.⁴⁸

Both Peukert’s emphasis on the “crises of modernity” and the recent works on Weimar’s pluralistic political culture offer a framework to a civil society approach to the crisis of Germany’s inter-war democracy. By analyzing politicians, intellectuals, and journalists, scholars have suggested that the term “crisis” in Weimar Germany had not a pessimistic connotation, but rather indicated an optimistic vision of the future amid changing and uncertain times. Against this background, intellectuals and politicians across the political spectrum tended to develop “rhetorical construction of a mutually

⁴⁷ Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: the Crisis of Classical Modernity* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1992).

⁴⁸ Anthony McElligott, ed., *Weimar Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), David L. Marshall, “Intellectual History of the Weimar Republic – Recent Research,” *Intellectual History Review*, vol. 20, no. 4 (2010), 503-517, and Benjamin Ziemann, “Review Article. Weimar was Weimar: Politics, Culture and the Emplotment of the German Republic,” *German History*, vol. 28, no. 4 (2010), 542-571. For a similar approach see Kathleen Canning, “Introduction: The Politics of Symbols, Semantics, and Sentiments in the Weimar Republic,” *Central European History*, vol. 43, issue 4 (2010), 567-580.

exclusive alternative for Germany's future development," around an exclusive "either-or" framework. The construction of these radical dichotomies defined the present as a time of decision and, by presenting "horror-scenarios" as an alternative, they aimed to motivate and push people to action.⁴⁹ From this perspective, the concept of civil society provides a useful framework for an analysis of the debates over forms of societal organizations in the Weimar Republic.

I view civil society as comprising a set of institutions and a political conduct.⁵⁰ I define this mode of political action as the "politics of civility," the praxis of civil society. This political praxis is rooted in the understanding that socio-political conflicts cannot be avoided in modern societies. I view therefore civil society as rooted in a peculiar attitude to conflict. Conflicts have a positive social function when they break the exclusive hold of ascribed identities on human action.⁵¹ Civil society therefore recognizes conflicts and multiplies them because the existence of exclusive socio-moral cleavage lines would disrupt the stability of modern societies, as Adam Smith and the authors of the *Federalist Papers* had recognized.

Civil society therefore cannot be limited to self-organization, as it is rooted in the notion of civility and civil action. Civility, politeness, and tolerance are the foundational blocks of civil society because they provide the means to counter the disrupting

⁴⁹ Rüdiger Graf, "Either-Or: The Narrative of 'Crisis' in Weimar Germany and in Historiography," *Central European History*, vol. 43, issue 4 (2010), 604-605. See also Rüdiger Graf, *Die Zukunft der Weimarer Republik: Krisen und Zukunftsaneignungen in Deutschland 1918-1933* (Munich: Oldenburg, 2008), Moritz Föllmer and Rüdiger Graf, eds., *Die "Krise" der Weimarer Republik. Zur Kritik eines Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2005), and Rüdiger Graf and Moritz Föllmer, "The culture of 'crisis' in the Weimar Republic," *Thesis Eleven*, vol. 111, no. 1 (2012), 36-47. On the semantics of the term "crisis" see Reinhart Koselleck, "Crisis," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 67, no. 2 (2006), 357-400.

⁵⁰ Edward Shils defines the practice of this political conduct "civil politics" and the ethos of it "civility." Edward Shils, "Civility and Civil Society: Good Manners Between Persons and Concern for the Common Good in Public Affairs," in *The Virtue of Civility. Selected Essays on Liberalism, Tradition, and Civil Society*, edited by Steven Grosby (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1997), 63-103.

⁵¹ Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: The Free Press, 1956), 67-85.

tendencies of modern societies. Crucially, civility is a socio-political principle that counterbalances self-interest, thus ordering society, ensuring its stability, and averting the dangers of factionalism and sectarianism.⁵² Civility therefore mediates between private interest and the common good.

The stability of liberal states thus depends on their ability to institutionalize conflicts.⁵³ The institutionalization of conflicts, however, presupposes a “politics of civility” at the individual level. In fact, individuals have to consider the socio-political enemy as a socio-political adversary to whom equal rights are granted.⁵⁴ The politics of civility thus presupposes a particular vision of politics. In fact, the acceptance of conflict requires that individuals view politics in economic terms, hence through the lenses exchange, scarcity, and alternatives. Compromise is accepted and differences can be negotiated, split, and reduced.⁵⁵

The relationship between the civil society debate, which is centered on the tension between private interest and common good, and a liberal democracy is based on a conceptualization of civility as the recognition of differences and conflicts. Civil society is closely related to the process of modernization because the “virtue of civility” breaks the exclusive ties of family, tribe, and religion. Civil society is therefore a form of societal organization that is juxtaposed to sectarian or religious notions of politics, which

⁵² In his works on moral philosophy and political economy, Smith identified moral principles such as sympathy and fellow-feeling as counterbalances to self-interest, thus ordering society and ensuring its stability and civility. The tendency to sympathize with those familiar to us underlined, however, the dangers of factionalism and sectarianism. This tension could be solved only through the “impartial spectator,” which emphasized the necessity of observing actions from outside and thus provided the prerequisite for the development of the concepts of civility and moral compass. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1976).

⁵³ Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany*, 28-30.

⁵⁴ Edward Shils, “The Virtue of Civility,” in *The Virtue of Civility. Selected Essays on Liberalism, Tradition, and Civil Society*, edited by Steven Grosby (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1997), 338-341.

⁵⁵ I draw on Avishai Margalit’s distinction between an economic and a religious view of politics. Avishai Margalit, “Sectarianism,” *Dissent*, vol. 55, no. 1 (2008), 37-46.

are rooted in the sacredness and non-negotiability of the “idea.” Paradoxically, however, both forms of societal organization are grounded in the process of individuation that accompanies modernization. In fact, both civil society with its attempt to balance society’s competing interests and “sectarian” approaches with their emphasis on extra-political or pre-political notions of unity and homogeneity reacted to the social fragmentation of modern societies.⁵⁶

Accordingly, I define civil society as an open public sphere outside state boundaries that, by institutionalizing and thus mediating between competing interests, allows individuals to participate in debates over the common good without being constrained by primordial (family, clan-based, or tribal) or sectarian ties. I suggest that in order to effectively support democracy, civil society is based on and recognizes conflict. In doing so, I distinguish civil society from a simple network of voluntary associations because it institutionalizes and mediates between conflicting interests. It is normatively defined as a sphere that not only goes beyond economic self-interests but also breaks the exclusive boundaries of family, clan, tribe, and religious community.

In this context, philanthropy plays a key role in shaping civil society. By definition, it represents a locus where individual actions intersect broader societal dynamics. Philanthropy is both an expression of identity, that is, of the self, and of the capacity to identify with the other.⁵⁷ Consequently, philanthropy contributes to establish those social bonds that bridge traditional socio-cultural divides, thus preventing the

⁵⁶ Emblematically, Ernest Gellner authored two influential books on civil society and on nationalism with a clear “modernist” approach. Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty. Civil Society and its Rivals* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996) and Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

⁵⁷ John O’Connor, “Philanthropy and Selfishness,” *Social Philosophy & Policy*, vol. 4, issue 2 (1987), 113-127 and Paul G. Schervish, “The Sense and Sensibility of Philanthropy as a Moral Citizenship of Care,” in *Good Intentions. Moral Obstacles & Opportunities*, edited by David H. Smith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 155.

solidification and atrophying of the exclusive identities of family, tribe, and religious community. In doing so, philanthropy is a foundational block of the politics of civility as it establishes, maintains, and strengthens those social bonds that hold modern societies together by countering the individualist tendencies of modern, complex societies. Furthermore, as this study will show, philanthropy supports the development of forms of political engagement outside formal political action. Philanthropy may support socio-political perspectives otherwise unrepresented within official political institutions, thus guaranteeing political pluralism.

Through an historical perspective, I investigate the inability of conceptions of civil society rooted in an acceptance of conflict to provide a solution to the tension between private interest and the common good in rapidly modernizing societies such as Germany at the turn of the twentieth century. Therefore, I analyze the disappearance of the civil society concept from the political vocabulary at the turn of the twentieth century. Germany's inter-war democracy offers a perfect vantage point to understand the dark sides of modernization and the limits of civil society's liberal project.

Political Education and the Politics of Civility: The *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* and the *Politische Kolleg*

The analysis of the praxis of civil society ought to focus on the processes by which theoretical constructs are transferred to society at large. The politics of civility is not simply the product of historical developments, as some of the most prominent scholars in the field have argued.⁵⁸ In fact, I view civility as an ethos and attitude that can be taught and learned. In this study, I focus on public intellectuals who sought solutions

⁵⁸ See for example John A. Hall, "The Nature of Civil Society," *Society*, vol. 35, no. 4 (1998), 32-41, John A. Hall, "Reflections on the Making of Civility in Society," in *Paradoxes of Civil Society. New Perspectives on Modern German and British History*, edited by Frank Trentmann, rev. ed. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 47-57, and Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*, 5.

to the tension between private interest and the common good in Germany's radicalized public sphere. The analysis of the praxis of civil society, however, entails a focus on the means by which theorists transferred their conceptions of forms of societal organization to the world of practice.

An intellectual history of civil society and rival forms of societal organization is only fruitful when it highlights the areas where the work of the abstract theorist overlaps practical experimentations. Accordingly, I focus on those theorists and intellectuals who were active at the critical juncture between the academic world of theory and practical, organizational experimentations. In so doing, I follow the lead of Jan-Werner Müller who has drawn attention to those theorists and “in-between figures” who mediated between political ideologies and the political justifications that these ideologies needed in order to validate themselves in front of the masses.⁵⁹ Germany's public intellectuals therefore provide a vantage point for the study of the praxis of civil society.

The intellectuals and their organizations at the center of this study serve as an historical case study for the analysis of the praxis of civil society in the Weimar Republic. The circle that formed around Ernst Jäckh grounded parliamentary democracy in the “politics of civility” and in an economic picture of politics. In fact, they emphasized willingness to accept conflicts, readiness to compromise, and inclination to negotiate differences. In so doing, they attempted to insert a civil society discourse in Germany's contentious public sphere. By contrast, the circle that formed around Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Max H. Boehm, and Heinrich von Gleichen proposed forms of societal

⁵⁹ Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy. Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). See also Jan-Werner Müller, “The triumph of what (if anything)? Rethinking political ideologies and political institutions in twentieth-century Europe,” *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2009), 211–226.

organizations that consciously sought to avert modern societies' socio-political conflicts. They did not accept the new liberal state and its institutions because the political process risked compromising the purity of the idea. Consequently, they favored socio-political systems that bypassed existing political institutions and created new channels of power that consciously avoided contrasting interests.

Both groups of intellectuals viewed the collapse of Imperial Germany in 1918 as a new beginning. They concurred on the need for a more democratic and inclusive society, although they disagreed on the form of government, and specifically on a liberal republican model. The simultaneous use of a democratic terminology, however, points to quite different meanings assigned to the concept of democracy (synchronic perspective). In fact, the intellectuals around Jäckh rooted democracy in a pluralistic vision of society, although they were not immune to ambivalences. By contrast, the intellectuals around the Moeller-Bruck and Gleichen rejected visions of society based on a multitude of independent individuals and proposed organic models of societal organization, which they deemed more democratic because naturally integrating the individual into the whole. These differences notwithstanding, both groups of intellectuals placed the “people” (*Volk*) at the center of their conceptualization.

As a result, political education became the answer to the problems of a democratizing society for both groups. Indeed, while these intellectuals notably differed in their analysis of German society and in the solutions they proposed, they shared the intention of transforming into reality ideological conceptualizations and saw – at least temporarily – the most promising tool to influence public affairs as well as political discourse in educational institutes and political education. Therefore, I use two

educational institutes as the center and point of reference of the two circles of intellectuals analyzed in this study.

The group that gradually formed around Jäckh is at the center of this study. Jäckh became the midpoint of a circle of liberal reformers in the aftermath of the death of Friedrich Naumann in August 1919. Jäckh's centrality, however, was silent and behind the curtain, although he egotistically prided himself on having a central, unofficial role in political decision-making. In fact, he was a skilful organizer and able manager of organizations rather than a sophisticated ideologue or theorist. In reality, therefore, the organizations that Jäckh founded over the course of his life were the point of reference of the intellectuals at the center of this study, rather than Jäckh himself.

Jäckh possessed an unmatched ability to co-opt personalities from all walks of life for his endeavors. Theodor Heuss's case is emblematic. Heuss had been the editor-in-chief of the *Necker Zeitung* in Heilbronn since 1912. In 1917, Jäckh called him to Berlin where he offered him a "double position" as editor of the magazine *Deutsche Politik* and as collaborator of the *Werkbund* (German Association of Craftsmen). In January 1918, Jäckh introduced Heuss to the circle around the renowned historian Hans Delbrück (the "Delbrück-Evenings") and, in the same month, Heuss also joined the "German Society 1914."⁶⁰ Heuss, who considered Jäckh in possession of "extraordinary organizational skills,"⁶¹ described the impact with the "Jäckh-enterprise" as being caught in a "precise bureaucracy like in a web."⁶² The case of Heuss (who after World War Two would

⁶⁰ See Theodor Heuss to Dr. Georg Friedrich Knapp, January 14, 1918, Theodor Heuss to Elly Heuss-Knapp, January 15, 1918, and Theodor Heuss to Martin Schlenker, September 14, 1918, in *Theodor Heuss. Bürger der Weimarer Republik. Briefe 1918-1933*, edited by Michael Dormann (München: K. G. Sauer Verlag, 2008).

⁶¹ Theodor Heuss, *Erinnerungen, 1905-1933* (Tübingen: Wunderlich Verlag, 1963), 179.

⁶² Theodor Heuss to Robert Bauer, January 30, 1918, in *Briefe 1918-1933*, 94-95.

become Germany's first federal president) confirms Jäckh's central role in Berlin's political circles.

The public intellectuals that were associated with Jäckh's most prestigious endeavor are at the center of this study. In the fall of 1920, Jäckh founded Germany's first school of public affairs, the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (German School of Politics, or DHfP). Jäckh was successful in involving numerous public figures in his venture, who were all actively participating in the public debates of the time. While their understanding of democracy and analysis of Weimar society's problems would significantly vary, they shared an understanding of the role of the public intellectual in Germany's public sphere. With few exceptions, these intellectuals avoided direct involvement with the political process and favored indirect forms of influence on public affairs.⁶³ As their involvement with the DHfP will clearly show, these intellectuals viewed informed and objective debates as the solution to the tensions of German society and as the best way to shape public opinion by bypassing the slogans and propaganda of political parties.

Scholars have analyzed the German School of Politics from two main perspectives. In the aftermath of the Second World War historians have stressed the democratic nature of the DHfP, as part of a general eagerness to identify democratic forces in pre-1933 Germany.⁶⁴ This narrative paved the path to more critical analyses that stressed the ambiguities of the DHfP and of German political sciences. Scholars

⁶³ Even Theodor Heuss, whose political ambitions emerged during the Weimar Republic and who sat in the Parliament as representative for the German Democratic Party, saw himself in these years primarily as an educator.

⁶⁴ This interpretation was based on an uncritical reading of Ernst Jäckh's celebratory accounts. See for example Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider* (New York: Norton & Company, 1961), 40 and – more recently – Antonio Missiroli, *Die Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (Sankt Augustin: Comdok, 1987).

dismissed the myth of the DHfP both as a democratic stronghold and as a locus of the development of a democratic-oriented political science. By drawing on two dissertations, political scientist Rainer Eisfeld challenged the positive image of the DHfP and uncovered Jäckh's ambivalent attitude toward the National Socialist regime.⁶⁵ This critical literature, however, primarily focuses on the development of German political sciences. In fact, these scholars point out the limits of political science's professionalization, the thematic shift toward the right by the early 1930s, and the School's continuities between its Weimar and Nazi phases (in terms of teaching, research, and personnel).⁶⁶

Scholars have overlooked, however, the central concern of these intellectuals by emphasizing the question of the development of political science over the pedagogical

⁶⁵ The two dissertations are Steven Korenblat, *The Deutsche Hochschule für Politik. Public Affairs Institute for a New Germany, 1920-1933*, dissertation thesis (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978) and Roswitha Wollkopf, *Zur Politischen Konzeption und Wirksamkeit der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik (1920-1933)*, dissertation thesis (Berlin: Humboldt University, 1983). While Korenblat made extensive use of archival sources located in the United States (in particular the files made available by the Rockefeller Archive Center and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), Wollkopf – an East German historian – had access to archival sources located in East Germany and thus inaccessible to western scholars. Among Rainer Eisfeld's publications see *Ausgebürgert und doch angebräunt. Deutsche Politikwissenschaft, 1920-1945* (Baden Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991) and "Nationale Politikwissenschaft von der Weimarer Republik zum Dritten Reich," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, vol. 31, no. 2 (1990), 241-243.

⁶⁶ On the continuities between the Weimar and the National Socialist periods see Hubertus Buchstein and Gerhard Göhler, "In der Kontinuität einer 'braunen' Politikwissenschaft? – Empirische Befunde und Forschungsdesiderate," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, vol. 27, issue 3 (1986), 330-340 and Ernst Haiger, "Politikwissenschaft und Auslandswissenschaft im 'Dritten Reich.' (Deutsche) Hochschule für Politik 1933-1939 und Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät der Berliner Universität 1940-1945," in *Kontinuitäten und Brüche in der deutschen Politikwissenschaft*, edited by Gerhard Göhler and Bodo Zeuner (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991), 94-136. On the professionalization and conservative thematic shift see Detlef Lehnert, "'Politik als Wissenschaft.' Beiträge zur Institutionalisierung einer Fachdisziplin in Forschung und Lehre der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik (1920-1933)," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, vol. 30, issue 3 (1989), 443-465 and Alfons Söllner, "Gruppenbild mit Jäckh. Anmerkungen zur 'Verwissenschaftlichung' der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik während der Weimarer Republik," in *Kontinuitäten und Brüche in der deutschen Politikwissenschaft*, edited by Gerhard Göhler and Bodo Zeuner (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991), 41-64. The most nuanced account is Steven Korenblat, "A School for the Republic? Cosmopolitans and Their Enemies at the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, 1920-1933," *Central European History* 39 (2006), 394-430. In a recent volume, Siegfried Mielke attempted to reappraise the DHfP, see *Einzigartig. Dozenten, Studenten und Repräsentanten der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik (1920-1933) im Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus. Begleitband zur Ausstellung* (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2006).

role of politics in the conception of the founding group of the DHfP.⁶⁷ These public intellectuals aimed both to rebuild Germany in the aftermath of the lost war and to re-elevate Germany to her natural role in the international community, as was repeatedly stressed on the occasion of the DHfP's opening ceremony.⁶⁸ To this end, these reformers momentarily abandoned Germany's traditional emphasis on foreign policy and focused on German society's internal fragmentation. They viewed internal solidarity and sense of community as the precondition for a renewed possibility of world power politics. This focus, however, was not a product of the Great War but rather part of the tradition of Friedrich Naumann's national socialism.⁶⁹ These intellectuals attempted to insert a civil discourse into the Weimar Republic's radicalized public sphere by conceptualizing politics as an objective science providing a common ground for sober political debates across opposing political factions.

The originality of the intellectuals around Jäckh emerges from a comparison with the circle that gradually formed around Moeller-Bruck and Gleichen. These intellectuals had not been politically active before the war. Rather, the experience of the "civic peace" and the shock of the Bolshevik threat influenced their theoretical approaches. This network was rooted in the web of war propaganda organizations that initially had been directed against the Western powers and – by the end of the war – against the communist

⁶⁷ To my knowledge, the only brief analysis focusing on the pedagogical work of the DHfP is Reinhard Vent, "Überparteiliche 'Politische Propädeutik.' Eine Konzeption zur politischen Bildung aus der Endphase der Weimarer Republik," *Die Deutsche Schule*, vol. 76 (1984), 283-294.

⁶⁸ The speeches held on occasion of the DHfP's opening ceremony are in *Politische Bildung: Wille, Wesen, Ziel, Weg. Sechs Reden gehalten bei der Eröffnung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1921).

⁶⁹ Friedrich Naumann was one of the founding fathers of the German liberal movement and a mentor for many of the intellectuals at the center of this study. In the two decades preceding World War One, he popularized the notion of a national socialism that could integrate the working classes into German society by appealing to their nationalism. By the end World War One, political and intellectual elites had grown aware of the mobilizing potential of nationalism and socialism. The Nazi movement was thus only one of multiple efforts to combine nationalism and socialism in order to mobilize the working classes by breaking the internationalism of Marxist thought.

threat. The experience within the official and unofficial propaganda apparatus of the German army contributed to the emergence of a new type of “professional” intellectual who had to rely on the market in order to find a space in Germany’s new public sphere.

Moeller-Bruck and Max H. Boehm were the ideologues of the group and aimed to renew the conservative movement. Moeller-Bruck rarely spoke in public and, rather, guided the circle by his mere presence.⁷⁰ By contrast, Boehm aimed to preserve “intellectual clarity and truth” and, “for the sake of the purity of the right ideas,” would reject and expel people from the circle for the fear of compromising the original message of the group.⁷¹ Boehm symbolically personifies the religious vision of politics that characterizes this group of intellectuals. In fact, they juxtaposed the purity and sacredness of the idea to the willingness to compromise and to the liberal political system’s lack of political direction, which they believed the Jäckh group personified.

In the first years Gleichen was the midpoint of this milieu because of his skills as an organizer and manager of organizations. He established the “June Club,” which rapidly became the core of the circle. The Club actively aimed to bridge the political and religious lines dividing German society and aimed to influence public affairs through publicist activities. In particular, the magazine *Gewissen* provided a platform for participation in public affairs while avoiding direct involvement with political parties. The *Gewissen* offered an ideal place for political engagement because it was conceived as non-partisan and “above” political parties, it was a platform for communication for personal viewpoints, and was embedded in Weimar’s political culture by criticizing

⁷⁰ Max Hildebert Boehm, “Moeller van den Bruck im Kreise seiner politischen Freunde,” *Deutsches Volkstum*, vol. 14 (1932), 694.

⁷¹ Eduard Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919* (Düsseldorf: Neuer Zeitverlag, 1935), 129.

contemporary events and longing for unity.⁷² The most promising endeavor of these intellectuals, however, became the *Politische Kolleg* (Political College, or PK), through which they attempted to transform into reality their theoretical constructs.

Historians have analyzed the *Politische Kolleg* as part of the larger intellectual movement referred to as conservative revolution, neo-conservatism, and young-conservatism. Armin Mohler has introduced the apparent antinomy of “conservative revolution,” which has been used to identify a group of intellectuals conceptually placed between National Socialism and conservative reactionarism.⁷³ Scholars have used a wide range of approaches to analyze this heterogeneous intellectual nebula, alternatively focusing on individual biographies, organizational networks, and theoretical frameworks.⁷⁴ Scholars do not only disagree on the common ground that – beyond individual differences – unifies the intellectuals of the “conservative revolution” but also on whether these intellectuals form a consistent group.⁷⁵ In addition, historians disagree

⁷² Claudia Kemper, *Das “Gewissen” 1919-1925. Kommunikation und Vernetzung der Jungkonservativen* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2011), 220-221.

⁷³ Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1918-1932. Ein Handbuch*, third edition (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989).

⁷⁴ For a focus on media see for example Kemper, *Das “Gewissen” 1919-1925* and Karlheinz Weißmann, “Das ‘Gewissen’ und der ‘Ring’ – Entstehung und Entwicklung des jungkonservativen ‘Zentralorgans’ der Weimarer Republik,” in *Konservative Zeitschriften zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur. Fünf Fallstudien*, edited by Hans-Christof Kraus (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003), 115-154. For a biographical focus see for example: Sebastian Maass, *Kämpfer um ein drittes Reich: Arthur Moeller van den Bruck und sein Kreis* (Kiel: Regin-Verlag, 2010) and Gabriele Clemens, *Martin Spahn und der rechts Catholizismus in der Weimarer Republik* (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 1983).

⁷⁵ While Mohler identifies as the common element of the conservative revolution a conceptualization of time that rejected a linear time, Breuer rejects the notion of conservative revolution because of the absence of agreement beyond a rejection of liberalism among these intellectuals. Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland* and Stefan Breuer, *Anatomie der konservativen Revolution* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993). In addition, from a Marxist perspective, Petzold describes the young conservatives as part of a strategy of a pragmatic wing of the monopolist capitalism that – aware of the limits of capitalism – employed different strategies to maintain a capitalist society and avoid – at the same time – revolutionary upheavals. Joachim Petzold, *Wegbereiter des deutschen Faschismus. Die Jung-Konservativen in der Weimarer Republik* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag, 1983). Lastly, in a recent volume, Berthold Petzinna characterized Arthur Moeller van den Bruck – the silent center of the young conservatives – as an example of “aesthetic opposition.” Berthold Petzinna, *Erziehung zum deutschen*

on the relationship between these intellectuals and, on the one hand, traditional conservatism and, on the other, National Socialism.⁷⁶

The common denominator of these two circles was the clear intention to influence public policy and shape public opinion. Their activities did not remain confined to theoretical debates, but consistently spilled over to the world of practice and of practitioners. With few exceptions, both circles did not include original thinkers or theorists. For example, Heuss re-elaborated the political thought of Friedrich Naumann and Max Weber. Similarly, in his memoirs, Moritz J. Bonn defined himself as a “speaking tube to convey hints for unscrambling history.”⁷⁷ Moeller-Bruck and Boehm were the official ideologues of the June-Club, but the originality and the coherence of their thought may be questioned. Therefore, these intellectuals primarily interpreted, transmitted, and simplified complex ideological systems, without necessarily contributing to their development. Most importantly, however, they attempted to transform into reality these conceptualizations, and political education as well as educational institutes would become a crucial tool in these efforts.

Since the constitutional debates in the spring of 1919, the United States had become a point of reference for liberals’ search for models of societal organization able

Lebensstil: Ursprung und Entwicklung des Jungkonservativen “Ring”-Kreises, 1918-1933 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000).

⁷⁶ From the perspective of the *Sonderweg* thesis, some scholars have described the Nazi regime as part of a long *Volksisch* and undemocratic German tradition and – not surprisingly – placed Arthur Moeller van den Bruck and other intellectuals of his circle in this broader tradition. See for example George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology. Intellectual origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1997 [1964]), Kurt Sonheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1978 [1962]), and Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a study in the Rise of German Ideology* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974 [1961]). By contrast, Mohler and Klemens von Klemperer saw in the young conservatives a new type of conservatism that – in spite of some individual overlaps – had to be separated from National Socialism. See Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland* and Klemens von Klemperer, *Germany’s New Conservatism. Its History and Dilemma in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968 [1957]).

⁷⁷ Moritz J. Bonn, *Wandering Scholar* (New York: J. Day, 1948), 316.

to guarantee levels of individual liberty while strengthening the national bonds of Germany's fragmented society.⁷⁸ At the same time, American philanthropists' and foundations' officials' open sympathies and – at times – unrealistic hopes in Germany's political leadership before the war had paved the road to hostility and enmity during the war. Against this background, the relationship between American philanthropic foundations and the leadership of the DHfP serves as an historical case study for the analysis of the (asymmetric) connections between American ideals of democratic processes and the realities of the German political system, and hence raises more general questions about the role of trans-national philanthropy in support of democracy and civil society.

Robert Arnove and the contributors to his influential edited volume argue that philanthropic foundations “have played the role of unofficial planning agencies for both a national American society and an increasingly interconnected world-system with the United States at its center.” By using a Gramscian approach, the authors use the notion of “Cultural Imperialism” to capture the ethnocentrism of the elites who controlled U.S. philanthropic foundations, their use of political and economic power to spread their “culture,” and the relationships between their educational policies and concepts such as “classical colonialism,” “internal colonialism” and “neocolonialism.”⁷⁹ Undoubtedly, the merit of these and similar contributions lies in drawing attention to inevitable power

⁷⁸ For the fascination of German elites with American models see Mary Nolan, *Visions of Modernity: American Business and the Modernization of Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) and Charles S. Maier, *In Search of Stability. Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁷⁹ Robert F. Arnove, ed., *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism: The Foundations at Home and Abroad* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 2 and 17.

dynamics at play in the relationship between grantors and grantees, which – as these scholars claim – much of the earlier literature had consciously downplayed.⁸⁰

A second – often overlooked – merit of this critical turn in the literature was to spur a new interest in the activities of philanthropic foundations. Although primarily focusing on the American context, Barry D. Karl and Stanley N. Katz convincingly have dismissed Gramscian as well as Foucaultian interpretative models.⁸¹ Karl, in particular, has argued that philanthropic foundations' main role was the training of leadership when industrialization and massification of society weakened the balance between democracy and mass society.⁸² Nonetheless, Inderjeet Parmar's recent work testifies to the attractiveness – and ultimately also to the theoretical fruitfulness – of more nuanced and sophisticated critical approaches.⁸³ As Katharina Rietzler, however, suggests in a recent review, the limited use of non-American sources constrains much of the literature on philanthropic foundations.⁸⁴

While scholars have investigated the institutional development of the DHfP and the contribution of American philanthropy, less attention has been paid to placing the relationship between German thought-leaders and American philanthropy beyond the

⁸⁰ Merle Curti is rightly considered a pioneering figure in the field of philanthropic studies. His work, however, was part of a project on the history of American philanthropy at the University of Wisconsin supported by a Ford Foundation grant. Therefore, it has been suggested that, as a result of the power dynamics between grantor and grantee, he uncritically assumed the altruistic and disinterested motives of American international philanthropy. Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963).

⁸¹ Barry D. Karl and Stanley N. Katz, "Foundations and Ruling Class Elite," *Daedalus*, vol. 116 (1987), 1-40.

⁸² Barry D. Karl, "Philanthropy and the Maintenance of Democratic Elites," *Minerva*, vol. 35 (1997), 207-220.

⁸³ Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century. The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press 2012).

⁸⁴ Katharina Rietzler, "Rezension zu: *Philanthropy in America. A History und Foundations of the American Century. The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power*," *H-Soz-u-Kult*, (February 26, 2013), <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/2013-1-127>.

level of the DHfP and its institutional existence (1920-1933).⁸⁵ By integrating traditional printed primary sources and archival materials, I provide a more nuanced understanding of the interactions between international philanthropy, political culture, and practical experimentations in Germany in the first three decades of the twentieth century. In addition, the focus on Ernst Jäckh offers fresh insights on the activities of American philanthropic foundations in Germany's contentious public sphere.

Methodology and Sources

In this study I focus on civil society by integrating political theory and empirical analysis. The intellectuals at the center of this study were critical figures at the intersection of the practice of politics and the theory of politics. The DHfP and the PK provide a fruitful vantage point for an investigation of the praxis of civil society. These two institutes, however, only represent the midpoint of the two circles of intellectuals at the center of this study and are the place where theoretical constructs intersected practical experimentations. Therefore, this study focuses on two levels of analysis. On the one hand, I investigate the contrasting forms of societal organizations that these intellectuals proposed. On the other hand, I focus on the organizational activities of these thought leaders. Consequently, I analyze the processes by which a conception of civil society paved the path to a radically different form of societal organization under the Nazi regime through the prism of these two groups of thought leaders.

⁸⁵ The institutional history of the DHfP has received much attention during the 1980s and 1990s. The records of the Rockefeller Archive Center, however, have been used only to complement other archival material in order to write a more comprehensive history of Jäckh's institute. While these scholars have provided a better picture of the institutional development of the DHfP, they have not placed – and in truth this was not the goal of these studies – the relationship between American foundations and DHfP in the broader “philanthropic dynamic” of grantors and grantees.

This study relies on historical comparisons. The investigation of the PK and its leadership serves as a comparative reference point that aims to highlight the peculiarity of the conception of civil society developed by the intellectual circle that gradually formed around the DHfP. In particular, this comparison points to radically contrasting understandings of democracy, nonpartisanship, and role of politics in modern societies. Conversely, this comparison also stresses certain *topoi* in public discourse and partially narrows the gap between democratic and allegedly un-democratic solutions to the tensions of German society. A comparison is asymmetrical when one of the comparative points is merely sketched rather than investigated in depth – the intellectuals around the PK in the case of this study.⁸⁶ This asymmetrical comparison serves to point the attention to the broader specificity of the role of the Jäckh circle.

An investigation of the praxis of civil society and of democratization processes requires a particular attention to periodization.⁸⁷ Periodization dates may be quite arbitrary dates that attempt to identify moments of discontinuity or change in the flow of time. In this study I move beyond the institutional existence of the DHfP and the PK. The activities of these intellectuals during World War One and after 1933 shed light on both the emergence and the fading of certain conceptions of civil society. Furthermore, I move beyond the traditional limits of periodization in historical approaches to democratization processes. In fact, as Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt suggest, the analysis of single democratic institutions rather than on conventional turning points allows to focus on critical junctures within larger processes of change, thus “leaving open the possibility that

⁸⁶ See Jürgen Kocka, “Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The Case of the German Sonderweg,” *History and Theory*, vol. 38, no. 1 (1999), 40-50.

⁸⁷ On the importance of periodization in social research see Arthur L. Stinchcombe, *The Logic of Social Research* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 117-148 and 130-135.

democratic reforms may stall or come under retrenchment.”⁸⁸ Consequently, I analyze crucial periods of change and factors that are not necessarily associated with the momentous years of 1918 and 1933. Consequentially, after briefly contextualizing the experience of these intellectuals in Imperial Germany, this study analyzes these elites’ activities and conceptualizations from the early days of World War One to their experience under the Nazi regime or in exile.

The analysis of the praxis of civil society must consider theoretical conceptualizations. The focus on conceptions of civil society and of rival forms of societal organization is based on a future-oriented rather than past-oriented perspective. The theoretical constructs and the rhetorical choices of these intellectuals provide important insights. These intellectuals viewed war and revolution as a “crisis” that freed Germany from the last vestiges of Imperial Germany and opened the road to new possibilities. Both groups employed an exclusionary rhetoric that explicitly juxtaposed their conceptualizations and educational institutes. In so doing, they created an “either-or” narrative that aimed to validate their own proposals of societal organizations by denigrating alternatives. In this way, this study places the concept of civil society in a general narrative of crisis and anxiety, which – however – assumed the possibility to influence future societal developments.

Accordingly, I use as key primary sources the major publications of the intellectuals who saw their institutional point of reference in either the PK or the DHfP. Published as well as unpublished texts such as speeches, memoranda, newspaper articles, and letters require – particularly in the field of political culture – critical reading and

⁸⁸ Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt, “The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond,” *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 43, no. 8/9 (2010), 942.

interpretation.⁸⁹ In political discourse, concepts such as democracy, parliamentarism, and nonpartisanship (just to mention a few) are not only loaded with meanings that have evolved over time but also tend to assume different and often contrasting meanings at certain historical junctures.

The focus on political culture and political discourses, however, points to the importance of also reading these texts as performative acts. In fact, the written text is often part of a general narrative (emplotment) that conveys additional meaning to the author's words. Therefore, the form and structure of writings or discourse may suggest forms of constructing the "self" that are also influenced by the broader "discourses" of the period. In addition, the attention toward the diverse roles of the subject in the text points to the different functions of the "I" as narrator and as subject of the narration.⁹⁰

The study of the praxis of civil society also requires an investigation of the organizational means by which these intellectuals aimed to act upon their theoretical constructs. These intellectual elites participated in a broad network of both formal and informal associations during World War One and its immediate aftermath. The failure of these endeavors to bridge the divisions of German society discredited the faith in associations's ability to solve the tension between private interest and the common good. Consequently, the DHfP and the PK became these intellectuals' most promising institutional efforts to act upon their conceptions of civil society and of rival forms of

⁸⁹ A good introduction to critical reading of sources is Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann, *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2008). A useful checklist for the reading of primary sources is in Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann, "Introduction," in *Reading Primary Sources*, 1-18.

⁹⁰ For "emplotment" see also Hayden White, "Interpretation in History," *New Literary History*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1973), 281-314. For "discourse analysis" see Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, translated by Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988 [1975]) and Peter Schöttler, "Historians and Discourse Analysis," *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 27, no. 1 (1989), 37-65.

societal organizations, which emphasized the unity of the “nation” over the freedom of the individual.

Archival material provides valuable information for the analysis of institutions and organizations. The broad associational network that developed during World War One and was crucial in the process of politicization of these intellectuals rarely left official records. Therefore, memoirs, autobiographies, and private papers often were the only source of information. They require a careful critical assessment because of the inherent bias of self-perception. The private papers of the founders, as well as of their associates and rivals help to study the purposes and motives of those who established the organization.⁹¹ In some cases, government and police files from the Berlin Regional Archive (Landesarchiv Berlin), the Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage (Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz), and the Federal Archives-Lichterfelde (Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde) have integrated these sources. In fact, many of these political clubs and associations established official as well as unofficial contacts with government agencies, and the police monitored them because of their political activities, although they did not always register as associations (*eingetragene Vereine*).

The analysis of the DHfP and the PK relies on traditional historical methodology grounded in archival research. The Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage and the Federal Archives-Lichterfelde hold the records of these two institutes. Furthermore, governmental files at both federal and state level complement these institutional records and provide a perspective on the political effectiveness of these intellectuals and their organizations. Accounts from its American financial supporters integrate the records of

⁹¹ On the relevance of integrating institutional records with private papers in philanthropic studies see David Hammack, “Private Organizations, Public Purposes: Nonprofits and their Archives,” *The Journal of American History*, vol. 76, no. 1 (1989), 181-191.

the DHfP. The Rockefeller Archive Center and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Archives provide a wealth of information by including official reports, grant communication, evaluations, and private letters as well as diaries of foundations' officers.

Overview

In this study I investigate the praxis of civil society through the prism of Germany's first school of public affairs. This analysis of the thought leaders that formed this school illustrates four major points. Firstly, the failure of voluntary associations to establish a cross-party solidarity discredited the primacy of associational life in civil society in the eyes of German elites. In fact, by the end of the World War One, voluntary associations seemed to replicate and reinforce German society's socio-political cleavage lines. Secondly, the intellectuals at the center of this study viewed civility as the core of their conception of civil society. Indeed, the politics of civility appeared to tame socio-political conflicts, ensure the good working of the liberal state, and build a civil society in Weimar's radicalized public sphere. Thirdly, I focus on the asymmetry between American ideals of democracy and the realities of the German political system and discourse by analyzing the relationship between U.S. foundations and these intellectuals. Finally, the last years of the Weimar Republic show how a conception of societal organization rooted in acceptance of conflict, willingness to compromise, and rationality (that is, the politics of civility) paved the path to powerful alternatives emphasizing the notions of unity and homogeneity. This study therefore points to the intrinsic weakness of the civil society project.

In “Chapter 2,” I analyze the activities of the intellectuals at the center of this study during the crucial years of World War One. Their participation in a network of associations that purposely cut across Germany’s traditional socio-moral milieus became a key moment in their politicization. These associations provided venues of social interaction that aimed to create a cross-class solidarity and hence integrate previously excluded groups into the national body. Furthermore, these clubs allowed Germany’s cultural elites to interact with the political as well as military leadership. By 1916, however, this nonpartisan solidarity proved to be ephemeral. New associations reproduced the pre-war fragmentation of German society and hardened socio-political cleavages. In the eyes of these intellectuals, these events discredited the centrality of associations in civil society. German public intellectuals therefore sought new principles to bridge the tension between private interest and the public good.

The development of contrasting conceptions of democracy after the military defeat in World War One is at the center of “Chapter 3.” Temporarily, the communist revolution in the winter of 1918/19 created an emergency that appeared to transcend political divisions. Although this commonality of intents soon faded, both liberal and conservative intellectuals recognized the need to develop forms of societal organization that would be more integrative than the one of pre-war society. They developed, however, contrasting conceptions of democracy that typified the conceptual distinction between an economic vision of politics and a religious picture of politics. Young conservatives proposed a powerful, alternative form of societal organization to the new political system that emphasized the unity of the “nation” over society’s pluralism, which they believed would enhance fragmentation. By contrast, liberals supported the new

republican form of government, although criticizing the proportional system of representation and the radicalization of political discourse. For these liberals therefore neither the state nor voluntary associations could tame the socio-political conflicts they risked breaking apart Germany's young democracy.

As I show in "Chapter 4," German public intellectuals aimed to transform their theoretical constructs into reality through political education. The liberals of the German School of Politics aimed to instill practical knowledge and a political sense of duty in German society. The good working of a parliamentary democracy depended on citizen's capacity to respect the position of the political adversary, develop a mature political will (which averted the dangers of ideology), and to discuss political differences and conflicts on the basis of "objective" facts. In so doing, these intellectuals grounded the liberal political system in a political ethos, the politics of civility. Conversely, the young conservatives of the *Politische Kolleg* saw their educational goal in both the creation of a collective political will and the education of political leaders who would bypass the fragmentation of Germany's political society. This comparison exemplifies the paradox of the civil society project. In fact, these intellectuals sought to solve the tension between private interest and the common good either by conceptualizing civil society as rooted in the acceptance of conflicts or by emphasizing notions of homogeneity and unity that bypassed the conflicts of a modern society.

In "Chapter 5," I analyze the connections between an American understanding of democracy and the reality of German political culture. German philanthropists' support to the School significantly decreased by the mid-1920s. During numerous lecture tours in both the United States and England, Ernst Jäckh and his closest associates publicized the

“New Germany” and emphasized the democratic convictions of Germany’s government and society. As a result, Jäckh secured the support of American philanthropists.

Rockefeller philanthropic institutions (the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial and the Rockefeller Foundation) linked, however, their grants to the development of empiric research in the social sciences. The relationship with Rockefeller philanthropic institutions gradually changed the School’s original focus on practical, vocational training. Furthermore, the emphasis of the leadership Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on international scientific cooperation was not fully aware of the self-serving approach to internationalism of Germany’s cultural elites. In fact, for German elites the prestigious relationship with American institutions served to break Germany’s international isolation and re-establish German cultural prestige. The analysis of this relationship highlights the development of a clear asymmetry between the School’s goals and priorities and those of American donors.

As I detail in “Chapter 6,” the School of Politics shifted toward more conservative positions by the second half of the 1920s. Paradoxically, the School started to officially cooperate with the *Politische Kolleg* in 1926, and several conservative scholars remained at the School even after the end of the cooperation in 1930. Influenced by American grants, the leadership of the School shifted the focus on the study of international relations, whose courses were taught by conservative scholars. The involvement of these thought leaders in endeavors such as the Abraham Lincoln Stiftung and the Gustav Stresemann Memorial confirm the marginalization of political education. At the same time, liberals’ appeal to the politics of civility sounded like a passive acceptance of the authoritarian shift in German politics. They viewed the centralization of authority in the

hands of the president as a way to bypass the deadlocked parliament. A conception of civil society grounded in the acceptance of conflict appeared unable to defend Germany's weak democratic system. The Nazi movement exploited the weaknesses of Germany's first democracy and the contradictions of Weimar's parliamentary system by emphasizing homogenizing notions such as "people's community."

CHAPTER 2: SOCIALIZATION AND POLITICIZATION BETWEEN IMPERIAL GERMANY AND WAR

World War One left a lasting imprint on the political consciousness of the intellectuals at the center of this study, as it shaped their perspectives of politics and of public intellectuals' role in society. The analysis of their actions during the war provides a necessary frame of reference for the subsequent investigation of their multiple efforts to shape Germany's future form of societal organization. The war experience reinvigorated these intellectuals' sense of responsibility toward the commonality, thus pushing them to seek new solutions to Germany's radicalized public sphere, as the associations that had emerged during the war proved unable to tame German society's socio-economic conflicts. The myth of the "civic peace" (*Burgfrieden*), of a German nation that successfully had bridged its internal fragmentation, became the nourished utopia of both these intellectuals and society at large.

German intellectual elites had struggled with Wilhelmine society's socio-economic transformations since the 1890s. Rapid industrialization and the increasing political weight of the Social Democratic Party, which had effectively organized the workers' movement, challenged society's established political, social, and economic equilibrium. Although these transformations had an extraordinary impact on the consciousness of a society that in few decades had witnessed national unification, (limited) parliamentarization, and swift industrialization, Germans' worrisome reactions mirrored a general European sense of crisis. A pessimist view of modernization, which appeared as an unstoppable trend toward bureaucratization, provided a conceptual frame

of reference for an entire generation of intellectuals desperately seeking new forms of societal organization at the end of the nineteenth century.¹

On the eve of World War One, therefore, German elites strained coming to terms with societal transformations that, in a combined assault of rationalization and massification, seemed to limit individual freedom and possibilities of political action. In the eyes of these intellectuals, the socialist party embodied German society's negative transformations. The centrality of economic relationships in Marxist thought seemed to reflect the general economicist and rationalizing turn of social life. Furthermore, combined with its ideology of internationalism and "class struggle," the socialist party's popularity seemed to confirm Germany's fragmentation in mutually exclusive milieus, hence supposedly weakening Germany in a time of rising international competition.

In Germany, social fragmentation was more radically perceived than in other industrializing societies. In fact, all of Germany's political parties were rooted in specific socio-moral milieus that, with the exception of the socialist one, had surfaced before the foundation of the Reich.² Each subculture developed its own network of voluntary and self-help organizations, trade unions, press, and eventually political parties.

Paradoxically, even industrialization was unable to break the hold of these socio-moral milieus. Rather, as the growing strength of the Social Democratic Party seemed to

¹ Georg Kamphausen, "Charisma und Heroismus. Die Generation von 1890 und der Begriff des Politischen," in *Charisma. Theorie, Religion, Politik*, edited by Winfried Gebhardt, Arnold Zingerle, Michael N. Ebertz (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993).

² M. Rainer Lepsius, "Parteiensystem und Sozialstruktur: zum Problem der Demokratisierung der Deutschen Gesellschaft," (1966), in *Deutsche Parteien vor 1918*, edited by Gerhard A. Ritter (Köln: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1973), 56-80. For an insightful critique see Margaret L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). By drawing on Dankwart Rustow's "dynamic model" of democratic transition, Anderson contends that the solidarity ties of these networks did not develop spontaneously but in reaction to the state's pressures on Socialists and Catholics during the *Kulturkampf* and the anti-Socialist Laws era. In other words, often milieu construction required a developed party organization (101-105; 123-133; 416-419).

confirm, industrialization appeared to radicalize German society's political cleavages by hardening class conflicts.³

Against this background of crisis, the ideas and actions of the liberal politician Friedrich Naumann became a point of reference for an entire generation of political as well as social reformers. As a pastor and theologian, Naumann had been involved in the charitable organizations of the Evangelical Church since the early 1880s. He had initially become interested in the "social question" through Adolf Stöcker's Evangelical Social Movement but had grown impatient with the conservatism of the Kaiser's court chaplain. Like most of the social reformers of the period, Naumann believed that Imperial Germany's political institutions had not used all the national forces in support of Germany's national as well as international goals. Hence, Naumann searched for alternatives to both social democracy and radical nationalism.

The intellectuals at the center of this study were indebted to Naumann for his attempt to integrate all social forces into the national body and for the centrality of political education in his thought. Beyond the level of socio-political ideals, however, Naumann's political practice became a model for a new type of public intellectual. The Naumann circle renounced the exclusivity of the intellectual ivory tower and was directly involved in the socio-political praxis. As an organizer, editor, and writer, Naumann used associations, magazines, and pamphlets to influence public opinion and public policy. As a point of reference for the Wilhelmine reformist milieu, he contributed to establishing a

³ Franz Walter and Helge Matthiesen, "Milieus in der modernen Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung," in *Anpassung, Verweigerung, Widerstand. Soziale Milieus, politische Kultur und der Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus in Deutschland im regionalen Vergleich*, edited by Detlef Schmiechen-Ackermann (Berlin: Schriften der Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, 1997), 46-75 and Jürgen W. Falter, "The Social Bases of Political Cleavages in the Weimar Republic, 1919-1933," in *Elections, mass politics, and social change in modern Germany: New perspectives*, edited by Larry E. Jones and James Retallack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 371-397.

new type of intellectual in German history, who – with few exceptions – avoided direct political participation and preferred informed and competent, research-based interventions in public debates in order to influence and shape public opinion.⁴

Fearing the dangerous consequences of Germany's socio-political fragmentation, Naumann (and most Germans) celebrated World War One as an historical moment recreating an original cross-class national unity. The intellectuals around Naumann joined a broad network of voluntary associations in support of Germany's military effort and in the attempt to gain political influence. Clubs and associations offered the possibility to discuss the course of the conflict with leading personalities of the civil as well as military leadership. Through personal connections and, in the area of war propaganda, through official forms of cooperation with federal agencies, therefore, this associational network provided avenues for political engagement. In addition, by cultivating a cross-class sociability, these associations aimed to support the social cohesion created during the early war years and to preserve it for the times of peace.

The solidarity celebrated by Berlin's political clubs and associations soon collapsed under the pressure of a total war. By the end of the war, contrasts between conservatives and liberals disrupted the internal life of those associations that had been established in the name of the "spirit of 1914." Furthermore, newly founded associations had a clear partisan character and were aligned with German society's traditional party divisions. At the same time intellectuals' hopes to influence political decisions were revealed to be ephemeral. On the eve of the establishment of Germany's first democratic form of government, voluntary associations had failed to instill a culture of compromise

⁴ Ursula Krey, "Demokratie durch Opposition: Der Naumann-Kreis und die Intellektuellen," in *Kritik und Mandat: Intellektuelle in der deutschen Politik*, edited by Gangolf Hubinger and Thomas Hertfelder (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2000), 74-75.

in their members and – on a lesser level – had not been able to provide forms of political influence.

Accordingly, in this chapter, I first discuss Naumann's analysis of Wilhelmine society, which deeply influenced the reformist milieu that gradually formed around him. As a writer and organizer, Naumann socialized and politicized a young generation of intellectuals who would play a central role in Germany's public life. Secondly, I describe the broad network of political clubs and associations that, during the war, aimed to strengthen Germany's home front by purposely cutting across political parties. In addition, organizations devoted to war propaganda soon entered in a close cooperation with governmental agencies and, in so doing, opened possibilities of political influence. As I analyze in the last part of the chapter, the solidarity across social classes, political party lines, and religious confessions celebrated by Berlin's political clubs rapidly faded under the pressures of a total war. In fact, the resurfacing of old antagonisms provided the background to the emergence of the intellectual circles around Ernst Jäckh and around Arthur Moeller van den Bruck and Heinrich von Gleichen.

Friedrich Naumann and the Wilhelmine Reformers

The euphoria that had accompanied the German wars of unification in 1866 and 1870-71 had progressively paved the path to disillusion. While united as a state, Germans still appeared divided as a nation. Concerned with the growing strength of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), Chancellor Otto von Bismarck outlawed the party with the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878. Aware, however, of the necessity to integrate the working classes into the newly formed German state, the chancellor tried to win the lower classes' allegiance by introducing social insurance legislation in the 1880s.

Nonetheless, in a rapidly changing society, these measures proved unable to break the hold of the SPD on workers. Increasing inequalities of wealth and income, low quality of housing for workers, and the social problems accompanying industrialization contributed to the growing influence of the socialist party on industrial workers.⁵

In this context, a new social perspective on poverty emerged. Nineteenth-century poor relief centered on the notion that lack of character determined all forms of social deviance paved the path to the acknowledgement of social and environmental forces that acted outside individuals' moral conduct.⁶ This new form of social knowledge relied on a deep trust in science's objectivity. New research frameworks emphasizing the "objectivity" of science appeared able not only to support the new tasks of the German welfare state and of the new industrial elites but also to provide an answer to the socio-economic controversies of the time. In fact, while the natural sciences offered solutions to the new needs of an industrial society, the social sciences, with their focus on quantifiable data on economy and society, addressed the so-called "social question."⁷

In 1890, the young Kaiser Wilhelm II renewed reformers' interest in the "social question" by ousting Bismarck, repealing the Anti-Socialist Laws, and renewing the

⁵ For a general overview see Brett Fairbairn, "Economic and Social Development," in *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, edited by James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 61-82.

⁶ Larry Frohman, *Poor Relief and Welfare in Germany from the Reformation to World War I* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008). See in particular chapters 6 and 7.

⁷ See Pierangelo Schiera, "Scienza e politica in Germania da Bismarck a Guglielmo II," in *Cultura politica e società borghese in Germania fra Otto e Novecento*, edited by Gustavo Corni and Pierangelo Schiera (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1986), 13-36, Antonio Missiroli, "Università, società e stato. L'origine delle 'scienze sociali'," in *Cultura politica e società borghese in Germania fra Otto e Novecento*, edited by Gustavo Corni and Pierangelo Schiera (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1986), 37-60, Margit Szöllösi-Janze, "Science and Social Space: Transformation in the Institutions of *Wissenschaft* from the Wilhelmine Empire to the Weimar Republic," *Minerva* 43 (2005), 339-360, and Eckhardt Fuchs and Dieter Hoffmann, "Philanthropy and Science in Wilhelmine Germany," in *Philanthropy, Patronage, and Civil Society. Experiences from Germany, Great Britain, and North America*, edited by Thomas Adam (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 103-119.

nationalist appeal to the working classes.⁸ Squeezed between a conservative state and a popular workers' movement, this reformist milieu saw in extra-parliamentary activities both a valid way out from the political stalemate and an alternative form of political engagement. Convinced that radical political conflicts would threaten Germany's unity and prosperity, they favored "scientific" and "objective" solutions based on empirical research (thus above political as well as social conflicts) and aimed to integrate the working class into the nation. The form of the voluntary association, the use of similar techniques to influence public policy, the appeal to the authority of science, and the emphasis on nationalism became common features of the reform movement.⁹

Naumann had a central role in the reformers' milieu because of his more direct involvement in politics.¹⁰ In the three decades before his sudden death in 1919, he influenced a group of young reformers who would play a crucial role in Germany's public life in the 1920s. The Naumann circle was a key moment in the process of socialization and politicization for all these public figures. Theodor Heuss, Ernst Jäckh, Elly Knapp (who became Heuss's wife), and Gertrud Bäumer were part of this younger generation of reformers who had joined the Naumann circle at the turn of the century and through it were first introduced to the public sphere. In addition, among an older generation of influential industrialists and academics, some were close to the Naumann circle in spite of temporary disagreements (Max Weber and Lujo Brentano), whereas

⁸ Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity. Anti-Politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 19-20 and 38-39.

⁹ Edward R. Dickinson, "The Bourgeoisie and Reform," in *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, edited by James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 151-173.

¹⁰ Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity*, 51-55, Dieter Krüger, "Max Weber and the Younger Generation in the Verein für Sozialpolitik," in *Max Weber and his contemporaries*, edited by Wolfgang Mommsen (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1987), 70-87, and Krey, "Demokratie durch Opposition: Der Naumann-Kreis und die Intellektuellen," 71-92.

others became involved in politics for the first time through Naumann's influence (Robert Bosch and Friedrich Meinecke).

Ernst Jäckh was one of the most significant personalities of Naumann's inner circle and is still today surprisingly absent in accounts of both Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic. A friend of Naumann since his student years in Munich at the turn of the century, Jäckh had supported Naumann's political campaigns as editor of the *Necker Zeitung* and served as secretary of the German *Werkbund* (German Association of Craftsmen). Although he had close ties with the Foreign Office and to the political leadership,¹¹ Jäckh would always renounce official political positions to preserve his independence. He self-described himself as a "civil-apostle" and an "educator of the nation" whose preferred political approach was that of the "Round-Table-Tactic." In Berlin, he soon emerged as an able organizer and in-between figure at the center of political clubs and associations.¹²

As a "manager" and organizer, Jäckh was a crucial figure in the circle that gradually emerged out of Naumann's reformist milieu. Significantly, Jäckh also became the gatekeeper and contact person between the reformist milieu and the philanthropist Robert Bosch, to whom he was related by marriage. The founder of one of Germany's most important manufacturing firms, Bosch was often referred to as the "red Bosch" because he had introduced the eight-hour workday and other social innovations when

¹¹ Emblematically, Jäckh identified himself with the Foreign Office during World War One in a series of conversations with Heinrich Kanner, who as editor-in-chief of the Austrian journal *Die Zeit* was interviewing well-known Germans. *Memorandum by Dr. Kanner of a Conversation with Professor Jäckh*, September 14, 1916, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series I, Box 1, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University in the City of New York.

¹² On the Munich reform milieu see Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity*, 238-242. Jäckh's account of his origins, relationship with Friedrich Naumann, and political tactics is in his *Der Goldene Pflug. Lebensernte eines Weltbürgers* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1954), 26-44, 85-89, and 184-195.

they were regarded as revolutionary.¹³ Introduced to the Naumann circle by Jäckh, Bosch would become involved in domestic policy and social questions through his close friendship with Naumann.¹⁴ During the war, he decided not to profit from the conflict and to devote all the profits he would derive from the war economy to public benefit projects.¹⁵ During and in the aftermath of the war, Bosch would support Jäckh's numerous reformist projects.¹⁶

Naumann's influence derived from his ability to carve out a sphere of action at the critical point of intersection between official politics and private endeavors. His attention to the interdependence between domestic reforms and aggressive foreign policy, his constant use of associational means to further his political as well as social ideals, and his emphasis on political education would shape the agenda of liberal reformism in the subsequent decades.

Naumann had soon recognized the necessity to involve the working classes in the political process. In fact, he did not consider Social Democrats national enemies, and viewed socialism as "the political organization of all the masses" rather than as a revolutionary ideology.¹⁷ Nonetheless, he aimed to integrate the working class into the national body by creating a nationalist-oriented party able to compete with socialists' internationalism. Consequentially, he tried to integrate socialism and nationalism, as the two most powerful forms of mass mobilization. To this end, in 1896, he founded the National Social Association, which aimed to incorporate the industrial masses into the

¹³ Theodor Heuss, *Robert Bosch. His Life and Achievements* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995 [1946]), 138-142.

¹⁴ Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 259 and Theodor Heuss, *Friedrich Naumann. Der Mann, das Werk, die Zeit* (München: Siebenstern Taschenbuch Verlag, 1968 [1937]), 440.

¹⁵ Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 248-253.

¹⁶ Heuss, *Erinnerungen, 1905-1933*, 216.

¹⁷ Friedrich Naumann, "Weshalb nennen wir uns Sozialisten?" (1899), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 268

national body because “in the long run it is impossible that a minority, which is fought against by the masses, could preserve Germany’s power.”¹⁸ Naumann, however, contended that the working class had to abandon its position of radical opposition to which it had been driven by the policies of the SPD and, rather, patriotically had to support the state.

Naumann somehow anachronistically linked his liberal imperialism to a Kaiser-mythology in *Democracy and Empire*, which became his best-known analysis of Germany’s contemporary problems. In his analysis, political society’s factionalism was Germany’s crucial problem.¹⁹ In fact, the three major social forces – *Junkers* (the anti-democratic, Prussian landowners), the industrial elites, and the clerical elites – were either unable to mobilize the masses in order to overpower its competitors or unwilling to ally and compromise with each other. Hence, Naumann developed the notion of a “social Empire,” which was rooted in the cooperation between working classes and Kaiser and based on the assumption that an inclusive and solid, national community would allow its head – the Kaiser in the historical figure of Wilhelm II – to pursue Germany’s international and imperialist goals.²⁰ In so doing, all ambiguities notwithstanding, Naumann recognized the necessity to root political systems in popular support.

To a certain degree, however, Naumann shared the common ambivalence toward the masses and political democracy. In fact, in his work, he used concepts such as “masses” (*Massen*), “nation” (*Nation*), and *Volk* that in Germany’s intellectual tradition

¹⁸ Friedrich Naumann, “National-sozialer Katechismus” (1897), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 201. See also Friedrich Naumann, “Liberalismus und Sozialdemokratie” (1901), in *Werke*, vol. 4 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 237-240.

¹⁹ Friedrich Naumann, *Demokratie und Kaisertum*, second edition (Berlin: Buchverlag der “Hilfe,” 1900), 37.

²⁰ Naumann, *Demokratie und Kaisertum*, 174.

were loaded with meaning. Significantly, he referred to the “industrial masses” as the forces of democracy. In so doing, he associated the concept of democracy to the word “masses,” which for German elites had traditionally had a negative connotation. By contrast, he employed words such as *Nation* and *Volk* – to which contemporaries attached a clear positive value – when describing the Kaiser’s charismatic role in guiding the German “nation” or “people.” These choices reflected the notion that only the Kaiser’s charismatic leadership could organize the disorganized democratic forces in a nation.

Scholars have traditionally pinpointed the shortcomings of Imperial Germany’s political system. They have detailed a political system in which the legislative had no influence on the executive and the Kaiser had the right to appoint Imperial ministers, and as King of Prussia he also had this right for Germany’s largest state.²¹ Nonetheless, historians have recently pointed to alternative readings of the German Empire’s political system and draw attention to the complexities and ambivalences of a simplistic dichotomy between economic modernization and political backwardness. From this perspective, authors have stressed that Germany’s record in legislative and administrative affairs, as well as in social policies, compared positively with other European states.²²

After the demise of the National Social Association – which had missed its scope by failing to attract the working class – Naumann became the point of reference for the left liberals by advocating the political cooperation between working class and

²¹ See for instance Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918*.

²² See for example Margaret L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Geoff Eley and James Retallack, eds., *Wilhelminism and its Legacies. German Modernities, Imperialism, and the Meanings of Reform, 1890-1930* (New York: Berhahn Books, 2004), and Mark Hewitson, “Wilhelmine Germany,” in *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, edited by James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 40-60.

bourgeoisie.²³ As a first step in creating such an inclusive political platform Naumann founded in 1910 the Progressive People's Party, which merged liberal groupings to the left of the National Liberal Party.²⁴ With the approaching of the 1912 parliamentary elections, the Progressive People's Party cooperated with Social Democrats, whereas the National Liberal Party, fearing socialists' growing influence, allied with conservative parties.

Naumann's analysis reflected the transformation of Germany's political society. The growing political influence of the SPD paralleled the penetration of the "masses" in Germany's political institutions, and thus polarizing political society. The bourgeois left (around Naumann and the Progressive People's Party) shared some of the positions of the workers' movement but was unable to make significant inroads in the working classes. Conversely, in reaction to the growing influence of the SPD, the National Liberal Party gradually aligned to both Conservatives and Imperial government. By contrast, by being rooted in the Catholic milieu and drawing support from the Catholics, the Catholic Center Party was the only real national party by being able to integrate various social classes.

The 1912 elections further fragmented Germany's political society. In fact, the SPD, by receiving more than one third of all votes, became the largest party in the parliament holding 110 of 397 seats. As a result, conservatives and radical nationalist associations again considered reversing the slow parliamentarization of the political

²³ Friedrich Naumann, "Die Zukunft unseres Vereins" (1903), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 306-320.

²⁴ Friedrich Naumann, "Fortschrittliche Volkspartei!" (1910), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 448-450.

system through a *coup d'état* from above. In short, they did not even believe in this limited form of democracy.²⁵

The new focus on the complexities of Imperial Germany's political system, however, warns against the establishment of a too rigid dichotomy between the defenders of the socio-political status quo and the workers' movement. In fact, some conservatives appealed to nationalism to win popular support and counter societal fragmentation. The Imperial Government's open support to the German Navy League and the Pan-German League corroborates interpretations of a manipulation of national opinion from above. At the same time, however, these societies became the pillars of an expanding nationalist milieu and contained the seeds of a nationalist opposition to the Imperial government.²⁶

Likewise, also Naumann's increasing use of the nationalist appeal confirmed both the stalemate of Germany's political system and liberals' limited possibilities of success in domestic politics, as they were unable to appeal to a broad enough group of voters.²⁷ As a result, he turned his attention to the lack of political education after failing with his social nationalism both to make inroads in the workers' movement and to achieve significant political influence in Germany's fragmented liberal camp. He recognized that class interests dominated mass politics, thus confirming Germany's socio-political fragmentation. Naumann had acknowledged the difficulties of cutting across social boundaries and thus stressed the complexity of creating stable parliamentary majorities already at the turn of the century; at the time, however, he had trusted in the Kaiser.²⁸

²⁵ Eley, *Reshaping the German Right*, 316-334.

²⁶ Roger Chickering, "Militarism and Radical Nationalism," in *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, edited by James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 196-218.

²⁷ Peter Theiner, "Friedrich Naumann und der soziale Liberalismus im Kaiserreich," in *Sozialer Liberalismus*, edited by Karl Holl, Günther Trautmann, and Hans Vorländer, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 81.

²⁸ Naumann, *Demokratie und Kaisertum*, 37-38.

After his disillusion with Wilhelm II, while seeing in general elections “the beginning of a nation’s self-education to the principle of majority formation,” he viewed the lack of both interest in politics and “political sense of duty” as the gravest threat to Germany’s political life.²⁹

Naumann never rejected in principle the monarchic system. Nonetheless, he grew concerned with the passivity of Germany’s educated middle classes. Directly addressing the educated bourgeois, he lamented,

It would be possible to steal it [civil rights] overnight and you would hardly notice it. Perhaps the cries of others would waken you a bit from the slumber, but you, you would not feel poorer even if tomorrow you would be back a subject and not a citizen.³⁰

Even in the framework of a monarchy, Naumann viewed political participation as crucial for the development of individuals’ sense of responsibility toward the community.

Naumann, however, only voiced a common concern of educated elites, as the general complains about the lack of political education, Germany’s “political dilettantism,” and centrality of economic concerns in political life confirmed.³¹

In Naumann’s thought, social nationalism and political education fostered individual responsibility and national community, thus countering German society’s fragmentation. Simultaneously, Naumann also participated in various non-political organizations, which attempted to counter those side effects of industrialization and rationalization that were reinforcing social fragmentation. In 1907, with the architects Henry van de Velde and Hermann Muthesius, he founded the German *Werkbund*, which

²⁹ Friedrich Naumann, “Die Politik als Pflicht” (1902), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 655-656.

³⁰ Friedrich Naumann, “Staatsbürger!” (1904), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 657.

³¹ See for instance Hans Plehn, “Eine Hochschule für Politik,” *Der Greif*, vol. 1, issue 10 (1914), 265-272.

supported the ideal of a cultural, artistic industrialization. The *Werkbund*, like the contemporary *Werdandi*-Union (also founded in 1907), was only one of a plethora of organizations that since the 1890s pursued the renewal of Germanness through cultural-political programs, which took an ambivalent path between traditional Germanic culture and modernity.³²

Naumann's life and his multifaceted activities mirror German intellectual elites' quest for new frames of references for the analysis of their modernizing society. Industrialization hardened class identities and, hence, radicalized the tension between individual interest and the common good. Naumann clearly pinpointed the problems of German society. The fragmentation of political, associational, and cultural life seriously limited the possibilities of individual actions for the good of the broader national community. In addition, as the work of Naumann's close friend Max Weber symbolized, liberal elites worried about the tension between the process of rationalization and individual autonomy.³³

Consequently, these intellectuals repeatedly turned to nationalism and leadership ideals (as exemplified by Naumann's Kaiser-mythology and Weber's charismatic leadership) as the means to counter both the emergence of a class-based society and rationalism of societal relationships, which appeared to be the main by-product of industrialization. Emblematically, at the same time also conservatives appealed to nationalism to win popular support and counter societal fragmentation.

³² See Wolfgang Hardtwig, "Kunst, liberaler Nationalismus und Weltpolitik. Der Deutsche Werkbund 1907-1914," in *Nationalismus und Bürgerkultur in Deutschland, 1500-1914: ausgewählte Aufsätze*, by Wolfgang Hardtwig (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 246-273 and Rolf Parr, "Werdandi-Bund," in *Handbuch literarisch-kultureller Vereine, Gruppe und Bünde, 1825-1933*, edited by Wulf Wülfing, Karin Bruns, and Rolf Parr (Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 1998), 485-495.

³³ Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

Political Influence and “Civic Peace”: Wartime Sociability and Propaganda

World War One tragically signaled the end of the long bourgeois century and laid bare industrializing societies’ inner tensions. In 1914 all the tensions that had accumulated over decades of industrial growth and imperialist expansion between states and within nations exploded. Although German elites would initially find solace in the fictional solidarity created by the war, World War One unleashed forces that gave a new urgency to the key questions that Naumann had addressed within the political framework of the Wilhelmine Empire. Across the political spectrum, political education would prominently figure as the best means to address social conflicts, which the pressures of a total war further radicalized.

All major European powers mobilized for war in the weeks following the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand in June 1914. At the same time, the national presses created a sense of expectation that made the declaration of war at the beginning of August appear as a solution to these societies’ domestic conflicts. While between July 26 and 30 the SPD organized mass protest demonstrations, the jingoistic scenes in Germany’s major cities notably allowed Kaiser Wilhelm II to state on August 1, on occasion of the announcement of the general mobilization, that he saw only Germans and not multiple, antagonistic political parties. On August 4, all German political parties voted for the war credits, including the SPD whose support to the war overshadowed its cautionary language.³⁴

³⁴ As good overviews see Wolfgang Kruse, “Die Kriegsbereitung im Deutschen Reich zu Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges. Entstehungszusammenhänge, Grenzen und ideologische Strukturen,” in *Kriegsbegeisterung und mentale Kriegsvorbereitung. Interdisziplinäre Studien*, edited by Marcel van der Linden and Gottfried Mergner (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991), 73-87, Reinhard Rürup, “Der ‘Geist von 1914’ in Deutschland. Kriegsbegeisterung und Ideologisierung des Krieges im Ersten Weltkrieg,” in *Ansichten vom Krieg. Vergleichende Studien zum Ersten Weltkrieg in Literatur und Gesellschaft*, edited by Bernd Hüppauf (Königstein: Forum Academicum, 1984), 1-30, Jeffrey Verhey, “War and Revolution,” in *Imperial*

Momentarily, the war seemed to call a halt to all reformers' worries. Although Germans' response to the war varied across social classes and regions, World War One appeared to create a national unity able to transcend internal differences and restore Germany's domestic solidarity. Still decades later, the renowned historian Friedrich Meinecke sentimentally remembered the strong emotion generated by the initial solidarity across parties.³⁵ Enthralled, Naumann stated

All the usual trivial matters appear at once of little value, and the hidden life of the whole lifts itself in the high. Also our party disputes become meaningless as long as the state has to be defended. Now we have no time for self-righteousness and vanity. We are all one party, namely a sacred, determined nation. The confessions shake hands, class struggles are postponed, old wounds are forgotten, until we once again have time for internal disputes, unless by themselves they are swept away in the stream of the general experience. Now it is really: Germany, Germany above all, above all in the world!³⁶

Not surprisingly, most of the reformers embraced the notion of the "civic peace" as the realization of their pre-war ambitions.

The war rapidly politicized German society. In fact, as a member of the myriad of political clubs that sprang up in Berlin recalled, "The air seemed electrically charged. At the time, almost everyone was driven by a kind of natural force to the liberating exchange of ideas with like-minded."³⁷ In the early war months, however, this process had a nonpartisan character and associational life became the favored means to foster social interaction across Germany's traditional socio-political dividing lines. Rather than

Germany 1871-1918, edited by James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 242-263, and Dirk Stegmann, "Krieg und politische Kultur: Intellektuelle Waffengänge 1914-1918," in *Das Zweite Jahrzehnt*, edited by Werner Faulstich (Paderbon: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2007), 21-39.

³⁵ Friederich Meinecke, *Erlebtes, 1862-1918* (Stuttgart: K. F. Koehler Verlag, 1964), 246-247.

³⁶ Fridrich Naumann, "Der Krieg" (1914), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 528-529.

³⁷ Paul M. Rühlmann, "Delbrücks 'Mittwochabend'," in *Am Webstuhl der Zeit: eine Erinnerungsgabe Hans Delbrück dem Achtzigjährigen von Freunden und Schülern dargebracht*, edited by Emil Daniels and Paul M. Rühlmann (Berlin: Hobbing, 1928), 76. See also Eugen Schiffer, "Delbrück der Politiker," *Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol. 218 (1929), 290-294.

limiting their contribution to the military effort to theoretical constructs, German intellectuals eagerly joined a plethora of associations and clubs that aimed to strengthen internal solidarity and keep alive the “spirit of 1914.” At the same time, associations, clubs, and more or less formal endeavors provided the means for political participation and forms of influencing public affairs.

The “German Society 1914” was the most impressive example of Berlin’s associational life during the war.³⁸ The Society was established on November 28, 1915 and soon after was officially registered as an association.³⁹ It counted 900 members soon after its establishment and reached a membership of over 2000 during its existence. The Society had grown out of more informal meetings held every Tuesday at Jäckh’s house (the Jäckh-Table),⁴⁰ which had aimed to create channels of communication between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of the Interior, as well as between the civil and the military leadership.⁴¹ Bosch bought and made available rent-free a palace in Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin to support the establishment of the “German Society 1914.”⁴² At the first meeting, Jäckh was nominated to the Board of Directors, whereas Bosch became a regular member.⁴³

³⁸ Historians have not paid much attention to this notable association. To my knowledge the only exceptions are Bernd Sösemann, “Politische Kommunikation im ‘Reichsbelagerungszustand’ – Programm, Struktur und Wirkung des Klubs ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914’,” in *Wege zur Kommunikationsgeschichte*, edited by Manfred Bobrowsky and Wolfgang R. Langenbucher (Munich: Verlag Ölschläger, 1987), 630-649 and Johanna Schellenberg, “Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914 (DG), 1915-1934,” in *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland, 1789-1945, vol. 1*, edited by Dieter Fricke et al. (Leipzig: VEB Bibliographisches Institut, 1983), 700-702.

³⁹ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914 to Königliche Amtgericht Charlottenburg, January 7, 1916, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

⁴⁰ Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 259, Jäckh, *Der Goldene Pflug*, 191-195, and Eugen Schiffer, *Ein Leben für den Liberalismus* (Berlin: Herbig Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1951), 30-31.

⁴¹ Jäckh, *Der Goldene Pflug*, 185-186.

⁴² Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 259, Jäckh, *Der Goldene Pflug*, 191-195, and Schiffer, *Ein Leben für den Liberalismus*, 30-31.

⁴³ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, *Minutes of the Versammlung zum Zwecke der Errichtung der “Deutschen Gesellschaft 1914,”* November 28, 1915, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

Like the “German Society 1914,” also the “Wednesday-Society” (initially, “Continental-Society”) resembled English political dining societies. The Swiss philosopher Ludwig Stein and Ernst Bassermann (leader of the National Liberals in the parliament) founded the “Wednesday-Society,” and organized it around a common dinner and “after-dinner-speeches.” The political variety of its membership confirmed the nonpartisan character of this dining society, as it included conservative politicians, industrialists (noteworthy, the future financial backers of the young conservatives, Hugo Stinnes and Alfred Hugenberg), Social Democrats, liberal academics, and publicists such as the conservative Russia-expert Otto Hoetzsch.⁴⁴

Endeavors such as “German Society 1914,” the “Wednesday-Society,” and the “Free Patriotic Union” (founded on February 28, 1915) purposely cut across party as well as ideological allegiances. These clubs cultivated – as Meinecke somehow nostalgically remembered – the spirit of 1914 by uniting Berlin’s leading circles and creating a unique opportunity for meeting people from all walks of life.⁴⁵ In so doing, they provided social avenues that facilitated the interaction between Social Democrats, trade unionists, conservatives, and radical nationalists. Furthermore, they reflected the nationalist and nonpartisan pathos of the early war period, and – in this – mirrored Naumann’s integrative approach.

Both the “Wednesday-Society” and the “German Society 1914” had an elitist character, although their ranks were open to previously excluded political groups. In fact,

⁴⁴ Stein’s autobiography is one of the few sources on the “Wednesday-Society.” Ludwig Stein, *Aus dem Leben eines Optimisten* (Berlin: Brückenverlag, 1930), 222-244. Cf. Claudia Hohberg, “Mittwoch-Gesellschaft (Bassermann-Stein) (MG) 1915-1933,” in *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland, 1789-1945*, vol. 3, edited by Dieter Fricke et al. (Leipzig: VEB Bibliographisches Institut, 1985), 381-383.

⁴⁵ Meinecke, *Erlebtes, 1862-1918*, 259-260 and 263-269.

it accepted members only by invitation and required high membership fees.⁴⁶ In addition, the “German Society 1914” had initially limited its membership to a maximum of 1000 members.⁴⁷ Critically, the Social Democratic press defined the “German Society 1914” as a “splendid list” of men of the propertied and educated circles, which with its high membership fees *de facto* excluded proletarians.⁴⁸ The socialist *Vorwärts* sarcastically noted that supporting the “civic peace” cost a 60 M yearly membership fee and invited Social Democrats to decide between membership either in the Society or in the SPD.⁴⁹

The intentional, direct and indirect, limits to membership, however, expressed the continuity more of patterns of political action rather than of social exclusion. In fact, by facilitating encounters and communication among economic, political, and social elites, both societies were still anchored to old patterns characteristic of the “politics of notables.” These associations’ goals were not to generate popular support for political leadership but rather to create avenues of communication and, if possible, to influence political decision-making through personal contacts and networks. Dinners and lectures, thus, were events aiming to facilitate the circulation of information and the rooms of the societies soon became spaces for both formal and informal political meetings.

Either explicitly or implicitly, however, these associations’ goals were not limited to the war period. As the “Free Patriotic Union” clearly stated, the somehow artificial commonality of intents that the war had created had to be cultivated in order to be

⁴⁶ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, *Satzung*, n.d., Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

⁴⁷ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, *Satzung*, n.d., Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332. In April 1918, the members’ assembly eliminated this limit to membership. *Protokoll der Mitgliederversammlung*, April 18, 1918, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

⁴⁸ *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, “Der Verein, der uns noch gefehlt hatte,” November 30, 1915. Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (hereafter defined as GStA PK), I. HA, Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 328.

⁴⁹ *Vorwärts*, “Was will die ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914’?” August 9, 1915. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 328.

maintained in times of peace. The ultimate goal, therefore, was to carry over the “power of national unity” from the war years to times of peace, which “must not destroy what the war accomplished.”⁵⁰ Accordingly, social intercourse and sociability were not only means for political action but also became a goal by themselves. During its first meeting, the Board of Directors of the “German Society 1914” debated avoiding lectures that “could lead to political discussions” and the Social Democratic delegate Albert Südekum suggested, for the sake of an “easier social intercourse,” to place in society’s main room a plaque expressing the organization’s spirit, “In this room everyone is introduced to everyone.”⁵¹

Explicitly, therefore, these societies cultivated a sociability that purposely crossed political camps and, in so doing, aimed to bridge Germany’s socio-political divides by establishing networks of personal relationships.⁵² According to its by-laws, the “German Society 1914” aimed “to provide ... men of all ranks and professions with no party distinction the opportunity of an unrestrained intercourse, free of prejudices, and hence carry the spirit of the unity of 1914 in the years of peace.”⁵³ In his opening address, the chair of the Society, Secretary of State Wilhelm Solf, rooted this cross-partisan spirit in the nationalism that the outbreak of the war had inflamed.⁵⁴ The “German Society 1914” held regular board as well as members’ assemblies until its demise in 1933/34.⁵⁵ Most

⁵⁰ Freie Vaterländische Vereinigung, *Kundgebung*, March 1915, p. 1, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 226, Nr. 1479.

⁵¹ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, *Protokoll. Erste Sitzung des Vorstandes der Deutschen Gesellschaft 1914*, December 2, 1915, p. 5, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

⁵² The real level of participation of Social Democrats in the “German Society 1914” is difficult to gauge. The surviving archival sources and the private papers of the intellectuals at the center of this study primarily refer to those socialist political figures that in August 1914 had openly supported the policy of national unity, such as Albert Südekum, Carl Legien, Robert Schmidt, and Eduard David.

⁵³ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, *Satzung*, n.d., p. 2, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

⁵⁴ Wilhelm Solf, *Rede zur Gründung der Gesellschaft 1914* (Berlin: Fischer Verlag, 1915), 8-9 and 24-25.

⁵⁵ See the records in Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

importantly, however, its public and private rooms soon became a common meeting point for Germany's elites. A cursory survey of numerous public figures' correspondence testifies to the centrality of the "German Society 1914" in the social life of the period. In 1918, paradoxically, Hans Delbrück preferred avoiding the rooms of the Society for a highly confidential political meeting because there "one is too easily observed."⁵⁶

Similarly, in a typical celebration of the "civic peace," the "Free Patriotic Union" opened its first public announcement with a statement of unity. "Hate and quarrel among fellow countrymen have been silenced, old barriers broke down, rusty prejudices have been put aside" because the emergency of the war had renewed the "awareness of belonging together."⁵⁷ In line with the common *topos*, the signatories of the document including Jäckh and Delbrück declared that the new association's goal was avoiding that the "special interest of the individual, of the political parties, of the religious confessions, of the professions, ranks and classes improperly pushes back the sense of commonality and aggravate the communal work."⁵⁸

These large societies cultivated social intercourse and sociability and, thus, primarily aimed to indirectly support Germany's military effort by strengthening internal solidarity. By contrast, other associations and informal groups aimed to support Germany's cultural propaganda. Explicitly, these associations participated in the propaganda war and, to this end, aimed to mobilize scholars and intellectuals who previously had not participated in political debates.

⁵⁶ Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, March 13, 1918, GStA PK, VI. Nl Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4.

⁵⁷ Freie Vaterländische Vereinigung, *Kundgebung*, March 1915, p. 1, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 226, Nr. 1479.

⁵⁸ Freie Vaterländische Vereinigung, *Kundgebung*, March 1915, p. 1, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 226, Nr. 1479.

Cultural as well as intellectual elites actively participated in Germany's war propaganda as part of a reaction to the Entente's accusations that Germany had violated Belgium's neutrality and committed brutalities against civilians. In October 1914, German intellectuals reacted with the pamphlet titled "To the Cultural World!" Signed by 93 well-known German public figures (Naumann among them), the famed "Manifest of the 93" represented intellectuals' endorsement of Germany's military conduct. With the Manifest, German intellectuals and scholars publicly protested against English and French war propaganda.⁵⁹ Against this background, associations, task forces, and committees became valid organizational forms to allow direct participation in public affairs, beyond the celebration of cross-party sociability and a sterile politics of notables.

The "Union of German Scholars and Artists" (*Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler*, or *Kulturbund*) reflected the organizational structures and intellectual goals of cultural elites' involvement in Germany's war propaganda. The *Kulturbund* aimed to provide intellectuals and scholars with the means to exercise political influence, because up to the war they had "remained isolated in their scriptoria and offices and therefore without influence."⁶⁰ With its activities, it aimed to create a more positive reception of Germany abroad and to counter the kind of propaganda that, on the eve of the war, had created enmity in all countries and represented an obstacle to the restoration of peace.⁶¹

⁵⁹ "An die Kulturwelt!" October 1914. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., Nr. 92.

⁶⁰ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, "Anhang: Arbeitsprogramm des Kulturbundes," in *Vortragsverzeichnis (Herbst 1916 – Fruehjahr 1917)* (Berlin: Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, [1917]), p. 72. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 447.

⁶¹ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, "Anhang: Arbeitsprogramm des Kulturbundes," in *Vortragsverzeichnis (Herbst 1916 – Fruehjahr 1917)* (Berlin: Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, [1917]), p. 73. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 447.

Initially a committee of few members,⁶² the *Kulturbund* soon became a standing organizations aiming to “correct untrue reports on Germany’s behavior for the cultural and scientific representatives of neutral foreign countries and to highlight the breaking of international law and human rights by our war enemies.”⁶³ Starting with the “Manifest of the 93,”⁶⁴ the *Kulturbund* used its members’ personal networks to distribute propaganda material because convinced that cultural leaders had an unmatched influence on the development of “the spirit of a nation” and because aware of the risks associated with an extreme propaganda in neutral countries.⁶⁵ By the end of January 1915, the *Kulturbund* had 195 members and its internal structure comprised a bureau – which focused on practical tasks such as correspondence and publications – and an archive, which collected relevant propaganda material.⁶⁶

While during the first months the *Kulturbund* primarily focused on its activities abroad, its leaders soon became aware of the importance of domestic propaganda. Already in October 1914, the *Kulturbund* had requested the Ministry of Education’s support for the organization of lecture series during the winter by arguing that both the abolition of many evening entertainments and the growing public interest in current political and military developments made these lectures necessary.⁶⁷ By the beginning of

⁶² Unidentified Author to Theodor Schiemann, October 12, 1914. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schiemann, T., Nr. 32.

⁶³ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Satzung*, [November, 1914]. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., T., Nr. 92.

⁶⁴ Kulturbund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler to Gustav Schmoller, November 12, 1914. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., T., Nr. 92.

⁶⁵ Kulturbund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler to August von Trott zu Solz, December 10, 1914. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76 Vc, Sekt. 1, Tit. XI, Teil 1, Nr. 54.

⁶⁶ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Bericht des geschäftsführenden Ausschusses über seine Tätigkeit bis Ende Januar 1915*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., T., Nr. 92.

⁶⁷ Kulturbund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler to Königliches Ministerium der Geistlichen und Unterrichts-Angelegenheiten, October 21, 1914. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76 Vc, Sekt. 1, Tit. XI, Teil 1, Nr. 54.

1915, the *Kulturbund* had revised its by-laws in order to broaden its membership.⁶⁸ The new by-laws now explicitly aimed to support a “patriotic attitude” on the home front and to establish practices of cooperation among German cultural elites that could support similar efforts in times of peace.⁶⁹

Baron Heinrich von Gleichen, a nationalist member of the “German Society 1914,” took over the executive leadership of the *Kulturbund* in 1916. Although mostly uninvolved in the pre-war political debates, in an article published in 1913, Gleichen had voiced nationalists’ longing for a European conflict, which would free the individual from industrial society’s rationalized life.⁷⁰ Gleichen had decried the “mechanics of the progress,” which had transformed public figures into marionettes “pulled by wires.”⁷¹ He lamented that the masses had enslaved Germans who lacked true leaders.⁷² On the eve of World War One, Gleichen viewed “the emergency” (*die Not*) as the only possible source of help. Like many of his contemporaries, he believed that only a catastrophic event, such as a war, could create the emergency that would free Germans of the impersonal rationalism of the rational laws that appeared to rule industrial mass societies.⁷³

Under Gleichen’s energetic leadership, the *Kulturbund* played a central role in the reorganization and centralization of Germany’s war propaganda. Shortly after his nomination, Gleichen drafted a memorandum on the necessity to reorganize Germany’s propaganda apparatus and submitted it to the director of the Foreign Office’s propaganda

⁶⁸ Kulturbund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler to Gustav Schmoller, April 30, 1915. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., T., Nr. 92.

⁶⁹ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Satzung*, [1915]. GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Schmoller, G., T., Nr. 92.

⁷⁰ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Sturmvögel! Ein Gespräch,” *Nord und Süd*, vol. 37, no. 460 (January, 1913), 117-124.

⁷¹ Gleichen, “Sturmvögel! Ein Gespräch,” 121.

⁷² Gleichen, “Sturmvögel! Ein Gespräch,” 124.

⁷³ Gleichen, “Sturmvögel! Ein Gespräch,” 122.

department. In the document, Gleichen pointed out the need to create a “Central Office” for the coordination of all war propaganda and for the collection of information. In particular, he stressed the importance to coordinate the activities of the myriad of private and official organizations.⁷⁴

Consequently, Gleichen became the in-between figure of official and private war propaganda. The Foreign Office offered him a position within its propaganda department with the task of collecting information on the personalities and associations active in the field of propaganda and establishing channels of communication with the Foreign Office.⁷⁵ Gleichen, however, insisted on continuing his activity at the *Kulturbund* with the motivation that without this “personal union” it would be difficult to gain an overview of the propaganda activities in Germany.⁷⁶ With the impossibility of contemporarily holding a leadership position in the Foreign Office and a private organization,⁷⁷ Gleichen used the *Kulturbund* to survey all the organizations active in foreign propaganda and establish connections between them and the Foreign Office.⁷⁸ By the summer of 1917, Gleichen had established a permanent office, directed by Walter Schotte, within the *Kulturbund* in charge of mapping the activities of organizations active in war propaganda and of publishing monthly reports summarizing these activities.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Heinrich von Gleichen, *Zur Organisation der Propaganda*, pp. 2-3. Enclosed in Heinrich von Gleichen to Erhard Deutmoser, March 2, 1917, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde (hereafter designed as BArch), R 901/71074.

⁷⁵ Paul von Buri to Heinrich von Gleichen, March 27, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074.

⁷⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen to Paul von Buri, March 28, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074.

⁷⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen to Paul von Buri, April 10, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074.

⁷⁸ Erhard Deutmoser to Heinrich von Gleichen, April 19, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074. According to the initial contract with Foreign Office’s propaganda department, the *Kulturbund* was paid monthly 500 M for three months, with the agreement that then the collaboration would be renegotiated. Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst to Heinrich von Gleichen, May 5, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074.

⁷⁹ Heinrich von Gleichen to Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst, July 17, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074. The Foreign Office appropriated a one-time grant of 500 M for the development of the monthly reports. Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst to Bund Deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, July 24, 1917. BArch, R 901/71074.

In its first years and under Gleichen's leadership, the *Kulturbund* had established itself as the key organization in war propaganda. Supported by membership fees, grants from the Ministry of War, Ministry of the Economy, and Ministry of the Interior, and substantial private contributions, its activities included the organization of public lectures, the distribution of placards and pamphlets, and the production of propaganda movies.⁸⁰ Also well-known liberal intellectuals close to the Naumann circle participated in *Kulturbund's* propaganda activities. Meinecke and Ernst Troeltsch held public lectures on "The German Freedom" and "Western Democracies,"⁸¹ and Jäckh, Naumann, and the scholar of geo-politics Adolf Grabowsky were members of the *Kulturbund's* various committees.

The war propaganda was in part cause and in part expression of the rapid erosion of the cross-party solidarity that had initially sustained the "civic peace." The debate on Germany's war aims and on internal reforms – which both became increasingly part of intellectuals' cultural propaganda – reflected the breaking down of Germany's inner cohesion and, at the same time, signaled the progressive disruption of the internal peace of Berlin's cross-partisan associations. In an internal memorandum, Prussia's Ministry of the Interior Friedrich Wilhelm von Loebell noted that the positions in the war aim debate reflected Germany's traditional party divisions. Observing the growing distance between government and conservative parties, he argued that domestic transformations must be "above the political parties."⁸² With the progressive collapse of the "civic peace,"

⁸⁰ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Tätigkeitsbericht*, January 1917, pp. 5-6. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 447.

⁸¹ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Tätigkeitsbericht*, June 1917, p. 2. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 447.

⁸² Friedrich Wilhelm von Loebell, *Bericht über die innerpolitische Entwicklung während des Krieges*, November 22, 1915. GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 84a, Nr. 40093.

however, opposition parties progressively made their war support dependent on domestic reforms, whereas conservative circles called for extreme war aims and a military dictatorship.

Associational Fragmentation and Political Radicalization

Already by 1916, the debate on “war aims” and internal reforms disrupted the internal life of those clubs and societies that had celebrated Germany’s “civil peace.” Noting the influence of industrial circles within the “Wednesday-Society,” Jäckh retrospectively juxtaposed it to the liberal circle around Hans Delbrück.⁸³ Like most political circles of the time, also the “Delbrück-Evenings” were the product of the war’s early enthusiasm. At the end of August 1914, the National Liberal representative Eugen Schiffer had established a regular “round-table” to discuss daily military and political events. As Schiffer later recalled, the group selected Delbrück as chairman for his rare ability to combine historical scholarship and political acumen.⁸⁴ Under Delbrück’s leadership, the question of the war aims dominated the group’s discussions.⁸⁵ Aware already in 1915 of the impossibility of a “victorious peace,” Delbrück – with the support of Troeltsch and Meinecke – advocated a “negotiated peace,” which rejected the extreme war aims of conservative and radical right-wing circles.

In contrast to both the “Wednesday-Society” and the “German Society 1914,” this circle only reunited an average of twenty persons and explicitly aimed to influence public affairs through personal contacts with the political leadership. Delbrück was in direct

⁸³ Jäckh, *Der Goldene Pflug*, 189.

⁸⁴ Schiffer, “Delbrück der Politiker,” 290-291. See also Prinz Max von Baden, *Erinnerungen und Dokumente* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1968), 162 and Max Montgelas, “Was ich von Delbrück gelernt habe,” in *Am Webstuhl der Zeit: eine Erinnerungsgabe Hans Delbrück dem Achtzigjährigen von Freunden und Schülern dargebracht*, edited by Emil Daniels and Paul M. Rühlmann (Berlin: Hobbing, 1928), 50-55.

⁸⁵ Rühlmann, “Delbrücks ‘Mittwochabend,’” 77-78.

contact with Rudolf von Valentini, a member of the Secret Civil Cabinet and close collaborator of Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg. In their correspondence, Delbrück advocated for a “negotiated peace” because “Our enemies derive a significant part of their strength from the belief that we are world conquerors who want to transform all other nations into Helots.”⁸⁶ The group was unable to win over the political and military leadership for a “negotiated peace” in spite of its political connections and Bosch’s generous financial support.⁸⁷ In his memoirs, Prince Max von Baden linked this lack of influence to the Delbrück circle’s cultural mindset, which not only made it difficult to oppose a course of action once the government had adopted it but also a reluctance to take personal responsibility.⁸⁸

With the radicalization of the war aims debate, however, also the liberal circles that supported a “negotiated peace” restated the ambivalent interdependence between foreign and domestic policy that had been integral part of Naumann’s national liberalism. While before the war reformers had argued that national solidarity was the precondition for a successful foreign policy, now foreign policy goals became tools for the reestablishment of domestic unity and neutralization of extreme annexationist plans. Although in an article published in 1917 Delbrück advocated for the establishment of a colonial empire,⁸⁹ in a private letter he explained that he did not believe in these plans but

⁸⁶ Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, December 7, 1915, GStA PK, VI. N1 Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4.

⁸⁷ Bruno Baier, “Delbrück als Führer der Mittwochgesellschaft,” *Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol. 218 (1929), 300 and Rühlmann, “Delbrücks ‘Mittwochabend’,” 78 and 80. On Bosch’s support see Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 265.

⁸⁸ Baden, *Erinnerungen und Dokumente*, 125.

⁸⁹ Hans Delbrück, “Versöhnungsfriede – Machtfriede – Deutscher Friede,” *Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol. 168, no. 3 (1917).

considered them necessary to distract popular opinion from the nationalist propaganda fixated on an annexation of Belgium, which he considered an obstacle to peace.⁹⁰

Similarly, while rejecting extreme annexations, the Naumann circle supported the idea of “Central Europe” (*Mitteleuropa*), which, based on a closer German-Austrian unity, attributed to Germany a central and dominant role in a military as well as economic unity of central European territories. To this end, Naumann established the “Working Committee for Central Europe” (*Arbeitsausschuss für Mitteleuropa*) with Bosch’s financial support, and Jäckh, Paul Rohrbach, and Philipp Stein founded the magazine *Deutsche Politik*.⁹¹

Established in February 1916, the “Working Committee for Central Europe” did not only express liberal circles’ ambiguities but also signaled the beginning of a new stage in the relationship between federal agencies and private initiatives. Conceived as a “task force with practical goals,” the Committee’s purpose was “the voluntary support of German government’s negotiations on the future political, military and especially economic relations between the German Empire, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey.”⁹² Accordingly, through Max Weber, the Committee inquired about possible forms of cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior.⁹³

Like most of the other organizations that sprung up during the war, Naumann’s “Working Committee” also aimed to seize the opportunities opened by the war, in the form of supporting a unity with Austria-Hungary that would survive the end of the

⁹⁰ Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, June 6, 1917, GStA PK, VI. NI Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4

⁹¹ Friedrich Naumann, *Central Europe* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1917 [1915]) and Ernst Jäckh, *Das größere Mitteleuropa: ein Werkbund-Vortrag* (Weimar: G. Kiepenheuer, 1916). On Bosch’s support see Heuss, *Robert Bosch*, 264.

⁹² Friedrich Naumann, *Protokoll der ersten Sitzung des Arbeitsausschusses für Mitteleuropa*, February 22, 1916, BArch, N 3001/29.

⁹³ Max Weber, *Protokoll der dritten Sitzung des Arbeitsausschusses für Mitteleuropa*, March 14, 1916, BArch, N 3001/29.

conflict.⁹⁴ The “Working Committee” built a network of personalities from the political as well as economic world (including all party directions) in order to create the basis for the realization of the *Mitteuropa* program. Naumann, Jäckh, Bosch, and Gleichen’s collaborator Schotte (who became the secretary of the organization) represent some of those involved in this organization. The organization aimed to support the *Mitteuropa* ideal through propaganda and a society for the fostering of European economic interests and, to this end, requested the financial support of the Foreign Office.⁹⁵

The Committee’s activities, however, soon appeared problematic to Germany’s political leadership. By the end of 1917, government officials expressed their concerns with Naumann’s propaganda for the *Mitteuropa* ideal and opposed public financial support for the expansion of the activities that Naumann had requested.⁹⁶ Significantly, Schotte received lukewarm replies when he invited high ranking governmental officials to participate in the founding of the “Economic Council for Central Europe,”⁹⁷ which aimed to lay the practical basis for a continuation of the current economic union also in times of peace.⁹⁸ For instance, vice-chancellor Friedrich von Payer pointed to the cool reception for the *Mitteuropa* plans in Austria and Hungary. Consequentially, concerned with the reaction of allied countries’ public opinion in a critical stage of the war, he informed Schotte that the government had no interest in being officially involved with an

⁹⁴ Gedankengang des Referates von Dr. Naumann. Enclosed in Friedrich Naumann to Arthur Zimmermann, October 6, 1916. BArch, R 901/2504.

⁹⁵ Friedrich Naumann to Richard von Kühlmann, November 14, 1917. BArch, R 901/2504.

⁹⁶ Hans Karl von Stein to Richard von Kühlmann, December 18, 1917. BArch, R 901/2504. Eventually, the “Working Committee” was appropriated a one-time grant of 60,000 M allowing Naumann to cover the costs of the expansion. Hans Karl von Stein to Richard von Kühlmann, February 7, 1918. BArch, R 901/2504 and Walter Schotte to von Goebel, March 13, 1918. BArch, R 901/2504.

⁹⁷ Walter Schotte to Paul von Hintze, July 10, 1918. BArch, R 901/2504 and Walter Schotte to Friedrich von Payer, July 9, 1918. BArch, R 703/4.

⁹⁸ *Bericht über die Gründungs-Sitzung des “Deutschen Wirtschaftsrates für Mitteleuropa,”* July 26, 1918. BArch, R 901/2504.

organization whose goals seemed to surpass those of the official negotiations with Austria and Hungary.⁹⁹

Government officials' hesitations toward Naumann's "Working Committee" paralleled the increasingly closer cooperation between federal agencies and Gleichen's *Kulturbund*. The *Kulturbund*'s shift from foreign to domestic propaganda signaled changes in Germany's society under the pressures of a total war. Significantly, this strategic change of focus was the outcome of a meeting held at the War Department on June 21, 1916.¹⁰⁰ Both the military and civil leadership gradually became aware of the dangers of German society's internal fragmentation, as food shortages threatened the "civic peace," and government's inability to control the black market created tensions between farmers, city dwellers, and government officials.¹⁰¹ By the end of 1917, Prussia's Ministry of the Interior noted with concern the growing discontent and unrest on the home front and developed channels of communication with other ministries to prevent riots and protests.¹⁰² At the same time, the Supreme Military Command stated the need to neutralize those elements that both consciously and unconsciously were weakening the morale on the home front.¹⁰³ Conversely, the Social Democratic press increased its attacks against the government suggesting that the preservation of the "civic peace" was based on an unequal treatment of social democratic associations.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Friedrich von Payer to Walter Schotte, July 15, 1918, BArch, R 703/4.

¹⁰⁰ Bund deutscher Gelehrter und Künstler, *Tätigkeitsbericht*, January 1917, p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 447.

¹⁰¹ See the good summary in Verhey, "War and Revolution," in *Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, 242-263.

¹⁰² Prussian Ministry of the Interior, *Secret Circular Letter*, September 4, 1917, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Pr. Br. Rep. 030, Nr. 15803 and Prussian Ministry of the Interior, *Secret Circular Letter*, December 7, 1917, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Pr. Br. Rep. 030, Nr. 15803.

¹⁰³ Supreme Military Command, *Secret Circular Letter*, November 15, 1917, p. 3, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Pr. Br. Rep. 030, Nr. 15803.

¹⁰⁴ See the newspaper clippings collected by the Prussian Ministry of the Interior. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 89, Bd. VI-VII.

The centralization of Germany's war propaganda and the focus of both official and private organizations on domestic propaganda reflected the increasing concerns with the home front. In November 1917, in an internal confidential note, the Supreme Military Command stressed the risk that Germany's war enemies may exploit the growing internal discontent and, thus, requested a more decisive counter strategy by Germany's federal agencies.¹⁰⁵ Arguing that the enemies were attempting to weaken Germany through "cosmopolitan and revolutionary ideas," the military leadership demanded an active involvement of Germany's cultural elites in domestic propaganda.¹⁰⁶ To this end, the government established the "Intelligence Service for the Homeland" (*Aufklärungsdienst in der Heimat*), which aimed "to fortify the inner strength of the German nation at war." Mirroring the plans exposed in Gleichen's memorandum, the central office for domestic propaganda coordinated the activities of all propaganda agencies, distributed "reliable" material, co-opted intellectual leaders, and financially supported private endeavors.¹⁰⁷

In the cultural war, German intellectuals developed the notion of a special German path (*Sonderweg*) between capitalism and Marxism. The celebration of the "spirit of 1914" and the "ideas of 1914," however, was increasingly directed inward and elevated 1914 to the beginning of a new, German era. The despised "practical," "materialistic," and "positivist" developments of German society were projected on the French and British war enemy and juxtaposed to an allegedly positive German path

¹⁰⁵ Supreme Military Command, *Secret Circular Letter*, November 15, 1917, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Pr. Br. Rep. 030, Nr. 15803.

¹⁰⁶ Henning von Holtzendorff to Georg von Hertling, February 8, 1918, BArch, R 703/111.

¹⁰⁷ *Richtlinien für den Aufklärungsdienst in der Heimat*, March 10, 1918, BArch, R 703/111.

rooted in the Idealist ideals of *Kultur* (culture) and *Bildung* (a spiritual formation of the man as a whole).¹⁰⁸

Gleichen had guided the expansion of the *Kulturbund*'s activities and its collaboration with the official propaganda apparatus of the German army. This space between official and private propaganda organizations became the seedbed of the future young-conservative milieu, which gradually formed around the figures of Gleichen and Arthur Moeller van den Bruck. While Gleichen "managed" a large private propaganda organization, the two future ideologues of the young conservatives, Moeller-Bruck and Max H. Boehm, were active in the propaganda department of the Supreme Military Command (*Auslandsabteilung der OHL*, or OHLA). Under the influence of the mythical community created by the "emergency" of the war, both ideologues developed influential analyses that aimed to counter the resurfacing of internal contrasts by stressing the common cultural, spiritual, and historical roots of the German nation.

These propagandists were consciously projected into the future. While the cross-partisan associations that had sprung up in the war's early months had aimed to preserve national solidarity also in times of peace, these radical nationalists used the rhetoric of national unity to break with the bourgeois (political as well as social) conventions of the long nineteenth century. In fact, during the war and in its aftermath, these intellectuals would recurrently use Wilhelmine society and its bourgeois conventions as a rhetorical device to condemn contemporary developments and push for a radical transformation of German society and politics.

¹⁰⁸ Rürup, "Der 'Geist von 1914' in Deutschland," 13-24, Stegmann, "Krieg und politische Kultur," 27-31, and Fritz Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins. The German Academic Community, 1890-1933* (London: Wesleyan University Press, 1990), 180-199.

The celebration of Germany's society at war therefore reflected a clear rejection of the soulless mechanized and industrialized life of Wilhelmine Society. Boehm explicitly juxtaposed Germany at war to Wilhelmine society. Although celebrating Germany's technical development and will to power, he condemned the past emphasis on "civilization," which had used up all national energies and thus not supported Germany's spiritual and cultural development. Pre-war German society was based on the "notion of security," which – he asserted – was rooted in a sense of reciprocal suspicion. In fact, he suggested that a lack of trust in fellow countrymen characterized modern societies. Industrial society had thus established welfare systems that replaced informal system of help with a "soulless mechanical institution," which had transformed a reciprocal "gift of kindness" into "a legal claim."¹⁰⁹ Like Gleichen, Boehm condemned the mechanization of life in industrial society and viewed welfare systems as an expression of this rationalization.

Nonetheless, writing at the end of the war, Boehm recognized that the German welfare state had facilitated the integration of the working classes into the national body. In fact, "The working class should grow into the idea of the Reich through a sober commonality of interests, in order to in peace as well as war ... become a solid reliable support for the young Reich."¹¹⁰ From this perspective, the war and the "civic peace" seemed to validate the Bismarckian strategy of the welfare state, or at least it appeared to transform the hopes of the reformers and critics of Wilhelmine Reich into attainable reality.

¹⁰⁹ Max H. Boehm, "Die Grenzen des Versicherungsgedankens," *Die Grenzboten*, vol. 74, no. 1 (1915), 20.

¹¹⁰ Hadubert, "Die deutsche Arbeiterschaft seit der Reichsgründung," *Die Grenzboten*, vol. 49 (1917), 267.

The war seemed to free individuals from industrial society's "wires," hence apparently validating the pre-war longing for a conflict that would break the hold of mechanized relationships. The war had created new opportunities for the individual.¹¹¹ By emphasizing the necessity of preserving the "militant man," Boehm clearly voiced the growing concerns that the initial war enthusiasm was already paving the path to the reemergence of old bourgeois conventions. Also Moeller-Bruck decried Imperial Germany's decadence and false sense of security and stated that, for Germans, "emergency" had always been "redemption"; in fact, "We are a nation for the case of emergency." He celebrated the spirit of the war because

The air of this war is our air, the pure and purifying, the sharp and spiritual and still so enormously true and real air, which already so frequently has ravished us in a whirl, which only in the emergency let us wind what greatness is, to which eventually we owe the enduring and earnest things in the world we have created.¹¹²

At the same time, the associations and societies that had supported cross-party sociability and cultivated the spirit of the "civic peace" strained under the reemergence of radical partisanship. Foreshadowing the resurfacing of past ideological contrasts, the growing affinity of the "German Society 1914" with Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg alienated more conservative personalities. In a memorandum of 1915, the radical nationalist member of the "German Society 1914" Wolfgang Kapp attacked Bethmann Hollweg who, through a "policy of diagonal," tried to balance the demands from both left

¹¹¹ Max H. Boehm, "Die bewahrung des kriegerischen Menschen," *Der neue Merkur* (December 17, 1915), 310.

¹¹² Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, "Wir sind ein Volk für den Ernstfall," *Der Tag*, no. 193 (August 19, 1914), 1-3. Citation on page 3 and 1.

and right.¹¹³ As a reaction, during a parliamentary session, Bethmann Hollweg decried the “on-goings with public and secret publications” and condemned Kapp as a one of “the pirates of public opinion” who were usurping the “flag of national parties” to disrupt the the German nation’s internal solidarity.¹¹⁴

Kapp – who after the war would lead a *coup d’état* against the republican government – also was the hidden initiator of a proposal aiming to change the by-laws of the “German Society 1914.”¹¹⁵ In the proposal, the authors argued that the Society was rooted in the war and that thus its ideals would be betrayed if it remained open, even only in theory, to members of nations at war with Germany.¹¹⁶ It was a “duty” for the Society – the drafters of the proposal asserted – to exclusively accept Germans because, as the name of the “German Society 1914” clearly signaled, the goal of the society was to keep alive the spirit of national unity that had emerged in the summer of 1914.¹¹⁷ The Members’ Assembly, however, rejected the proposal, which received only two votes in support.¹¹⁸ Few months later, Kapp would leave the Society.¹¹⁹

By 1917 the fragmentation of German political society reflected the antagonisms among intellectual elites. In April, the socialist party split into two camps over the support to the war – the anti-war Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) and the Majority SPD. In July, the Parliament passed a Peace Resolution that again divided

¹¹³ Wolfgang Kapp, *Denkschrift: Die nationalen Kreise und der Reichskanzler*, May 1915. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 84a., Nr. 40097.

¹¹⁴ *Reichstagsverhandlungen*, 59. Sitzung, June 5, 1916, pp. 1510-1511. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 84a., Nr. 40097.

¹¹⁵ [Paul Graf Hoensbroech] to Wolfgang Kapp, March 27, 1918, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 398.

¹¹⁶ Paul Graf Hoensbroech, *Anträge für die Mitgliederversammlung am 18. April 1918*, January 1918, p. 1. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 398.

¹¹⁷ Paul Graf Hoensbroech, *Anträge für die Mitgliederversammlung am 18. April 1918*, January 1918, p. 3. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 398.

¹¹⁸ *Protokoll der Mitgliederversammlung*, April 18, 1918, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

¹¹⁹ Wolfgang Kapp to Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, October 14, 1918, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 398.

Germany's political society along the traditional lines dividing supporters and opponents of the status quo. When, also in July, the Army Military Command ousted Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg, radicals' demands for a military dictatorship appeared to be realized under the powerful war heroes Paul von Hindenburg and Erich von Ludendorff. These events testified to the definitive collapse of a political common front.

Against this background, previous claims of nonpartisanship paved the path to endeavors that were clearly factional and often established in direct juxtaposition to other ventures. In September 1917, Kapp (at the time still a member of the "German Society 1914") and Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz founded the German Fatherland Party, which supported radical territorial annexations. Allegedly pursuing exclusively foreign policy goals, the new party had included in its name a reference to the faded patriotic spirit of August 1914. The Social Democratic as well as liberal press immediately accused the Fatherland Party of being "only a new concealment of well-known men,"¹²⁰ and of fostering domestic antagonisms by defining itself as patriotic, thus implicitly suggesting that other political parties were not supporting the Fatherland.¹²¹

The "Union of the Kaiser's Loyalists" (*Bund der Kaisertreuen*) added radical domestic policies to the annexationist aims of the Fatherland Party. Despite denials from the leadership of the Fatherland Party,¹²² critics recognized the Union as a "sub-company" aiming to fulfill the Fatherland Party's domestic goals.¹²³ Reacting to the combined "threat" of parliamentarism, democratization, and social democratization, the

¹²⁰ *Vorwärts*, "Die neue Partei!" September 9, 1917, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 970n.

¹²¹ *Königsberger Volkszeitung*, "Dr. Körte und der 'innerer Feind,'" October 6, 1917, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 970n and *Königsberger Volkszeitung*, "Die Vaterlandspartei als 'innerer Feind.' Eine Zuschrift des Oberbürgermeisters Dr. Koerte," October 6, 1917, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 970n.

¹²² Alfred von Tirpitz, *Erklärung der Deutschen Vaterlands-Partei*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 571.

¹²³ *Vorwärts*, "Der 'Bund der Kaisertreuen.' Eine Tochtergesellschaft der Vaterlandspartei," December 7, 1917, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 970n.

Union demanded “an unconditional, manly and tough, advocacy of the principle that what belongs to the Kaiser, remains to the Kaiser.”¹²⁴

As the war entered its third winter, calls for peace gained more popular support. Food rationing, massive casualties on the battlefields, and uncertainties over the attainability of a victorious peace extracted a heavy toll on a population that had entered the war trusting in a swift and triumphant victory. The establishment of associations expressing antagonistic perspectives on peace and war thus symbolized the end of the mythical solidarity of the early war years, and Germany’s associational life again expressed traditional political dividing lines.

At the beginning of 1917, Delbrück had denounced the dangers of radical annexationist war aims. In confidential letters, Delbrück informed Valentini that, with a group of like-minded personalities, he aimed to collect funds to support political endeavors fighting against domestic and foreign chauvinism. While this struggle was necessary because chauvinism was an obstacle to peace, he initially argued that these plans had to be postponed to avoid a further radicalization of domestic contrasts.¹²⁵ Expressing similar concerns, Meinecke condemned extreme annexationist plans because they only radicalized domestic contrasts. In addition, he argued that the war aim debate risked generating the belief abroad that the German government supported such extreme annexationist plans.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Bund der Kaisertreuen, *An alle Kaisertreuen!* Fall 1917, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 571.

¹²⁵ Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, February 27, 1917, GStA PK, VI. NI Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4. See also Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, March 24, 1917, GStA PK, VI. NI Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4.

¹²⁶ Friedrich Meinecke, “Kriegsziele hüben und drüben,” *Deutsche Politik*, vol. 2, no. 25 (June 22, 1917), 790.

Max Weber also entered the political fray with a series of articles published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in the summer of 1917. He condemned radicals' "inveighing against the enemy" and "mak[ing] speeches and pass[ing] resolutions about what 'we' must annex before 'we' can conclude peace."¹²⁷ He argued that parliamentary democracy was superior to the German form of government not because of the concept of popular sovereignty, but because it was more efficient in the context of modern, rationalized warfare (as the Western powers' military successes were demonstrating). He attacked those "literati" criticizing the parliamentary form of government "in the most arrogant and extravagant form, with disdainful venom and without any willingness to understand the preconditions of effective parliaments."¹²⁸

By the summer, Delbrück also argued that only the concession of democracy and the reform of the Prussian electoral system could avoid internal collapse during the winter.¹²⁹ At the same time, the liberals participating in the war propaganda voiced their skepticism about propaganda's effectiveness. In a private letter, Troeltsch asserted that while in the past it had been possible to influence foreign countries by stressing Germany's cultural and scientific achievements, now this was "totally excluded." The only way to have an impact abroad – he continued – was through domestic reforms, "All the rest is, completely now, totally ineffective and purely theoretical."¹³⁰ Observing the

¹²⁷ Max Weber, "Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany," in *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 1381.

¹²⁸ Weber, "Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany," 1381-1469. Quotations on pages 1381-1382.

¹²⁹ Hans Delbrück to Rudolf von Valentini, July 1, 1917, GStA PK, VI. Nl Rud. V. Valentini, Nr. 4.

¹³⁰ Ernst Troeltsch to Friedrich Schmidt-Ott, March 30, 1917, GStA PK, VI. HA Nl Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 446

unfolding events in Russia, Meinecke stressed the necessity for domestic reforms to show “that the days of the conservative authoritarian system have ended for us.”¹³¹

Liberals founded the “National Union for Freedom and Fatherland” (*Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland*, or *Volksbund*) as a counterforce to the German Fatherland Party. This new organization overlapped the “Free Patriotic Union” and the “Delbrück Evenings.” Rejecting both the cooperation with the Fatherland Party and careful of not moving “too much to the left,” the *Volksbund* involved the powerful Christian as well as Free Trade Unions.¹³² Observers from the Fatherland Party recognized the threats coming from the new organization. They feared it would compete with the Fatherland Party and develop a “silent propaganda” against Kapp’s endeavor, thus threatening to co-opt the Fatherland Party’s more liberal elements.¹³³

The speakers clearly expressed their opposition to the Fatherland Party during the opening ceremony of the *Volksbund*. In his address, Meinecke stated that, although past differences did not disappear, the war had created a commonality of interest and had bound together German society. This unity, however, was not the same as the one of August 1914 because “we again have among us sharp and profound party juxtapositions, and out of these contrasts has been born our *Volksbund*.”¹³⁴ The *Volksbund* – Meinecke continued – was as committed to the fatherland as the Fatherland Party was, but “our heads are cooler and clearer!”¹³⁵ While still rooted in the rhetoric of national unity, the *Volksbund* was thus the product of Germany’s fragmented political context.

¹³¹ Meinecke, “Kriegsziele hüben und drüben,” 790.

¹³² Adam Stegerwald to D. Weber, November 5, 1917, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 412.

¹³³ Unidentified author to Wolfgang Kapp, December 4, 1917, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Kapp, W., Nr. 412. See also Unidentified Report, [December 1917], GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Kapp, W., Nr. 412, ff. 32-34.

¹³⁴ Friedrich Meinecke, “Rede,” in *Volksbundes für Freiheit und Vaterland, Um Freiheit und Vaterland* (Gotha: Verlag Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1918), 25.

¹³⁵ Meinecke, “Rede,” 26.

Although the *Volksbund* did not adopt the strong position against the Fatherland Party that Delbrück had advocated,¹³⁶ it was seen as a central office for propaganda against the Fatherland Party's "desperate efforts" to win members.¹³⁷ Competing with the financially potent Fatherland Party,¹³⁸ the *Volksbund*'s capacities were only increased when Bosch – initially referred to as an anonymous "friend" – guaranteed strong financial support for two years on the condition that the *Volksbund* hired an "agitator" and increased its publishing activities.¹³⁹ In addition, in September 1918, the Board of Directors decided to decrease the minimum membership fee in the hope that this would facilitate "the competition with the Fatherland Party."¹⁴⁰

In contrast to the elitist approach of the cross-partisan organizations of the war's early months, the *Volksbund* was aware of the need to root political decision-making in popular support. Meinecke argued, "A state, which has to conduct a war with a mass army of 12 percent of the population, has also to base its domestic policies on the masses."¹⁴¹ To this end, the *Volksbund* clearly pushed for domestic reforms. In its first public announcement, it explicitly stressed the interconnections between domestic reforms and a successful foreign policy.¹⁴² Even more explicitly, during the opening ceremony, the leadership of the organization argued that a strong and effective foreign policy was possible only if large sections of society supported it. This, however, required

¹³⁶ Protokoll über die Sitzung des Vorstandes, Arbeitbeirates und Arbeitsausschusses des Volksbundes für Freiheit und Vaterland, den 26. Januar 1918, n.d., BArch, R 8057/2.

¹³⁷ Verband der Deutschen Gewerkvereine to Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland, January 24, 1918, BArch, R 8057/17.

¹³⁸ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 25. Januar 1918, BArch, R 8057/2.

¹³⁹ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 1. Juni 1918, BArch, R 8057/2.

¹⁴⁰ Martin Wenck to Mitglieder des Ausschusses, September 9, 1918, BArch, R 8057/4.

¹⁴¹ Friedrich Meinecke, "Vaterlandspartei und deutsche Politik," *Die Hilfe*, no. 47 (November 22, 1917), 702.

¹⁴² Aufruf. Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland, [November 1917], GStA PK, VI. HA NI Kapp, W., Nr. 412.

that the people were allowed greater political participation, “the free development of the people in the homeland is the highest and supreme source for outward-directed power. ... As the greatest service to the fatherland we need a liberal reform.”¹⁴³ To this end, the Board of Directors decided to rely on the organizational network of its institutional members to establish local branches in cities with over 50,000 inhabitants.¹⁴⁴ The *Volksbund* requested lists of “trustworthy” personalities in several cities who would play a crucial role in broadening the associational network of the organization.¹⁴⁵

The *Volksbund* also established close connections with the “Intelligence Service,” which benefited from the former’s broad network and contacts with the trade unions. The “Intelligence Service” relied on organizations such as the *Volksbund* and the “Union of German Scholars and Artists” in its efforts to reach all sections of German society. It financially supported these organizations, and Ernst Francke (president of the *Volksbund*), Gleichen, and Jäckh represented them within the “Intelligence Service.”¹⁴⁶ By the summer of 1918, the “Intelligence Service” could claim to have connections with ca. 760 organizations with a total of 7 million members.¹⁴⁷

This connection with Germany’s central propaganda office gave liberal circles access to the political leadership in the last, critical months of the war. Within the executive committee of the “Intelligence Service,” the growing awareness of the negative

¹⁴³ “Um Freiheit und Vaterland!” in *Volksbundes für Freiheit und Vaterland, Um Freiheit und Vaterland* (Gotha: Verlag Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1918), 8.

¹⁴⁴ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 11. Januar 1918, BArch, R 8057/2.

¹⁴⁵ *Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland* to General-Sekretariat des Gesamtverbandes der Christ. Gewerkschaften Deutschlands, January 17, 1918, BArch, R 8057/17, General-Sekretariat des Gesamtverbandes der Christ. Gewerkschaften Deutschlands to *Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland*, January 22, 1918, BArch, R 8057/17, and *Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland* to Verband deutscher Handlungsgehilfen, January 17, 1918, BArch, R 8057/17.

¹⁴⁶ Erhard Deutelmöser, *Aufzeichnung*, February 10, 1918, BArch, R 703/111 and Staatssekretär des Reichsschatzamts to Friedrich von Payer, March 8, 1918, BArch, R 703/111.

¹⁴⁷ *Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit der Zentralstelle für Heimatsaufklärung seit dem 24. Mai 1918*, July 31, 1918, BArch, R 703/111.

impact of food rationing on the population spurred debates on the need to offer “something positive,” as for example the reform of Prussia’s electoral system and social legislation.¹⁴⁸ Francke and Theodor Heuss – one of Naumann’s protégés – stressed the dangers of strikes and of the common “depression,” and insisted on the symbolic importance of an official gesture regarding the Prussian electoral reform. Aware of the limits of domestic propaganda and the increasing popular distrust in the political leadership, Francke noted, “With movie screenings and posters it is not possible to win such confidence.”¹⁴⁹

The failure of Germany’s last military offensive in March 1918 set in motion a chain of events that would influence both the actions and conceptualizations of intellectual elites and the nation at large. The Supreme Military Command renounced its almost dictatorial powers against the backdrop of imminent defeat on the war front and growing discontent on the home front. In this new political context, Meinecke pointed out the necessity to go public with a program oriented toward the future in a late-September meeting of the *Volksbund*’s executive directors. Meinecke warned against leaving the initiative to political parties and renouncing the opportunity to exercise direct influence on the people, although other members more inclined to wait for the outcome of parliamentary negotiations opposed his plans.¹⁵⁰

With the nomination of Prince Max von Baden to lead a government that for the first time included delegates of the parliament, Germany became a parliamentary monarchy. Naumann celebrated these transformations and saw in them the realization of

¹⁴⁸ Sitzung des ständigen Ausschusses für die Heimataufklärung, April 22, 1918, pp. 2-3. BArch, R 703/111.

¹⁴⁹ Sitzung des Ausschusses für den Aufklärungsdienst in der Heimat, June 11, 1918, p. 2. BArch, R 703/111.

¹⁵⁰ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 27. September 1918, BArch, R 8057/2.

the vision he had exposed almost twenty years earlier in *Democracy and Empire*.¹⁵¹

Similarly, in his opening address at the *Volksbund*'s assembly on October 27, Francke stated,

When almost a year ago the *Volksbund* was established, it raised its voice for the unity between national leadership and people's representation on the basis of trust in the people and by the people. This goal is achieved. We have a people's government, which relies on a vast parliamentary majority and wants to anchor itself in the people.¹⁵²

Germany's "bourgeois" revolution, however, rapidly paved the path to the November Revolution, which shook liberals' last bourgeois securities. On November 9, the Workers' and Soldiers' Council in Berlin called for a general strike, which was accompanied by the sailors' mutiny in Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. In commenting on the chaos and insecurity, one perceptive observer emblematically noted, "when leaving home, one wonders whether houses and trees are still standing."¹⁵³ In Berlin, on November 9, rumors of an impending putsch and the unclear intentions of the Spartacist leadership almost compelled the SPD deputy Philipp Scheidemann to declare a "German Republic." On the same day Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled into exile in Holland, thus sealing the fate of the German Empire. On November 16, Troeltsch recognized, "the end is here, the four-year long veil of secrecy has been lifted. It is an end with horror, far more terrible than expected," and saw the only solution in democracy, "there is no other way and no other help..."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Friedrich Naumann, "Der Volksstaat kommt!" *Die Hilfe*, no. 41 (October 10, 1918), 480.

¹⁵² Niederschrift. Versammlung Sonntag, den 27. Oktober 1918 in der Singakademie zu Berlin, p. 1. BArch, R 8057/3.

¹⁵³ Ernst Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe. Aufsätze über die deutsche Revolution und die Weltpolitik, 1918/22* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), 19.

¹⁵⁴ Ernst Troeltsch, "Das Ende des Militarismus" (November 16, 1918), in *Spektator-Briefe. Aufsätze über die deutsche Revolution und die Weltpolitik, 1918/22* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), 1 and 12.

The Weimar Republic came into being “by default” against the backdrop of workers’ and soldiers’ councils springing up in November and December of 1918 and the Spartacist uprising in January 1919. In the midst of general insecurity and a mounting civil war, voters elected on January 19, 1919 the National Assembly and supported with three-quarters of the vote the “pro-republic” parties, that is, the Majority Socialists, liberals, and the Catholic Center Party. The delegates assembled for the first time on February 6, 1919 in the safety of the city of Weimar, 180 miles south of Berlin where the Social Democrat Gustav Noske had violently suppressed the German revolution with the help of the voluntary, “Free Corps” units of former soldiers. The Assembly elected the Social Democrat Friedrich Ebert president and Philipp Scheidemann of the SPD formed a coalition government of the Majority SPD, the liberal German Democratic Party (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*, or DDP), and the Catholic Center Party (the so-called Weimar coalition).¹⁵⁵

With the end of the war, also the focus of the clubs and associations that had been formed during the war changed. At the “Delbrück-Evenings,” rather than seeking direct political influence, Delbrück guided the debates into an inquiry of the causes and conduct of the war, thus often “specialists” from military as well as diplomatic circles would attend the meetings in the 1920s.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, at the “Wednesday-Society,” the discussions focused on foreign as well as domestic politics and Ludwig Stein invited foreign speakers in order to discuss contrasting perspectives. Germany’s request of

¹⁵⁵ The course of these events is well-known. A good general reference is Hans Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), chapters 2 and 3. The characterization “by default” is borrowed from Anthony McElligott, “Political Culture,” in *Weimar Germany*, 27.

¹⁵⁶ Rühlmann, “Delbrücks ‘Mittwochabend,’” 78 and Baier, “Delbrück als Führer der Mittwochsgesellschaft,” 299-303.

membership in the League of Nations, for example, caused heated debates, but Harry Graf von Kessler and Walter Simons were able to convince the majority of the members of the wisdom of the request.¹⁵⁷ Although the “German Society 1914” would continue to serve as a meeting place for political elites until the Nazi seizure of power,¹⁵⁸ an anonymous author decried on occasion of its ten-year anniversary the failure to establish similar organizations in the post-war years.¹⁵⁹

Symbolically, Berlin’s new social clubs naturally aligned with the new political parties that mushroomed in the months leading to the elections of the National Assembly. The Berlin Democratic Club was close to the German Democratic Party, whose first chair was Naumann. Founded on March 9, 1919 at the Hotel Bristol in Berlin, the Club’s by-laws set the acceptance of the new democratic form of government as a precondition for membership. As an elitist group that was open to new members only through invitation, the Club united leaders from all walks of life for political discussion and social gatherings.¹⁶⁰

In a parallel development, in October 1919 conservative, aristocratic, and military circles founded the “National Club,” whose first president became General Oskar von Hutier.¹⁶¹ As the membership list of the Advisory Board shows, this social club was close to both the conservative German People’s Party (*Deutsche Volkspartei*, or DVP) and the

¹⁵⁷ After a lecture by Georg Tschitscherin on “Bolshevism and Pacifism” (June 21, 1922) arguing that after the Rapallo Treaty Germany was not isolated anymore and thus should join the League of Nations only with the Soviet Union, the question of membership in the League became central to the debates in the Wednesday-Society. Stein, *Aus dem Leben eines Optimisten*, 238-240.

¹⁵⁸ Minutes, Special Meeting, August 15, 1934, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26332.

¹⁵⁹ *Berliner Tageblatt*, “Zehn Jahre ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914’,” November 5, 1925, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 12, Scrapbook 22, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University in the City of New York.

¹⁶⁰ Rupprecht Weidle, “Demokratischer Klub (DK), 1919-1933,” in *Lexikon zur Parteiengeschichte: die bürgerlichen und kleinbürgerlichen Parteien und Verbände in Deutschland, 1789-1945*, vol. 1, edited by Dieter Fricke et al. (Leipzig: VEB Bibliographisches Institut, 1983), 272-273.

¹⁶¹ Minutes, Founding Assembly of the Nationaler Klub, October 1919, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26424.

even more conservative German National People's Party (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*, or DNVP).¹⁶² Indeed, the National Club aimed "to support the social aggregation of German men and women who acknowledge the strengthening of the nationalist thought as the precondition for the reconstruction of Germany."¹⁶³

Milieu formation had fragmented and polarized German society at the turn of the twentieth century in the wake of and in reaction to the processes of democratization, parliamentarism, and industrialization. Even World War One and the process of modernization did not break the exclusive ties of subcultures. On the contrary, the Weimar Republic, which is characterized in Peukert's account by an accelerated process of modernization, consolidated milieus.¹⁶⁴ As a result, it opened a "civil war of memories" in which the right, the republicans, political Catholicism, and the extreme left developed their own master-narratives of Weimar's place in history, hence stressing "the lack of any basic consensus about the past, present and future of the German state and society."¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

Historians and political scientists have used concepts such as "socio-moral milieu" and "cleavage" to point out German society's fragmentation in the late nineteenth century. While some scholars tend to relativize the rigidity and exclusivity of these social camps, contemporaries voiced a common sense of fragmentation and incompleteness.

Although they could pride themselves on Germany's economic and military

¹⁶² Verzeichnis der Mitglieder des Beirats des Nationalen Klubs e.V., n.d., Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26424. The Advisory Board included Otto Hoetzsch, Erich Ludendorff, Alfred Hugenberg, Hugo Stinnes, and Albert Vögler.

¹⁶³ Nationaler Klub, *Satzung*, January 15, 1920, p. 1, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26424.

¹⁶⁴ Walter and Matthiesen, "Milieus in der modernen Gesellschaftsgeschichte," 47-48.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Gerwarth, "The Past in Weimar History," *Contemporary European History*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2006), 6 and 7.

achievements, contemporaries lamented the withering of the spirit that had guided national unification and had made these attainments possible. By the end of the nineteenth century, the growing influence of the socialist movement gave visible expression to the alleged positivist and economic-centered turn of German social, cultural, and political life. The penetration of the masses in both the educational and political system not only questioned established cultural norms but also challenged the codified balance of power in Germany's political system.¹⁶⁶

Naumann recognized the futility of any attempt to exclude the socialist masses from public life. By acknowledging Social Democrats as political opponents, he broke the long tradition that had labeled the German socialist party as an un-German and anti-national force. Naumann's goal, however, remained the integration of the workers' movement into the national body; a goal that could be achieved only by breaking the party allegiance of the workers through an emphasis on the national element. In the traditional German perspective of the primacy of foreign policy, the internal solidarity and solidity deriving from a successful integration of all national forces was the precondition for Germany's leading role in the international arena.

The war seemed to create the internal unity that Imperial Germany's liberal reformers had been longing for since the 1890s. In its initial phases, the war appeared to cancel Germany's traditional political, social, and religious cleavages. German elites actively aimed to support this artificial unity by joining a plethora of formal as well as informal organizations, groups, and clubs that aimed to reinforce Germany's domestic solidarity by cultivating a cross-partisan sociability. These organizations consciously

¹⁶⁶ On the debates on milieus, cleavages, and camps see the review in Matthew Jefferies, *Contesting the German Empire, 1871-1919* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 109-125.

supported social interaction of the highest echelons of German society in order to create channels of communications both across the political spectrum and between Germany's cultural elites and political leadership. In this way, these associations also provided avenues for the political participation of German intellectuals who – with few exceptions – had until then shunned the highly politicized public sphere.

The cultivation of domestic solidarity clearly had a foreign policy function. As Naumann and the Wilhelmine reformists had recognized since the 1890s, the inner strength of the German nation was seen as the precondition for an effective foreign and military policy. Paradoxically, the necessity to integrate all societal strata in the national body not only disrupted the internal life of Berlin's nonpartisan associations but also domestic unity. In fact, the rhetoric of unity and internal solidarity was an ideology that within itself repeated the social fragmentation of German society. While authoritarian elites celebrated the integration of all sections of society into the national body, minority as well as marginalized groups interpreted their participation in the national community as part of a process of socio-political recognition. The ideology of national solidarity was therefore repressive because it aimed to eliminate social conflicts, and projected domestic tensions on the image of the enemy.¹⁶⁷

By the second half of the war, the old dividing lines of German society resurfaced stronger than before. The German Fatherland Party and the *Volksbund* gave visible expression to the fragmentation of associational life. Paradoxically, German cultural elites' growing involvement in propaganda activities signaled the end of the mythical "civic peace" of the early war period. Germany's war propaganda had been focused on the home front by supporting the narrative of a defensive war and the specificity of

¹⁶⁷ See also Kruse, "Die Kriegsbereitung im Deutschen Reich zu Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges," 83-85.

Germany's cultural as well as political development. Federal agencies' attempt to involve cultural leaders and their organizations in the propaganda apparatus reflected political elites' growing concerns with domestic unrest. At the same time, however, this intensified cooperation between private organizations and federal agencies did not result in an enhanced political influence of Germany's intellectual elites. As the case of Naumann's "Working Committee" shows, political leadership worried that private initiatives would surpass official policy and thus become counterproductive. Conversely, Gleichen's *Kulturbund* and the executive committee of *Aufklärungsdienst* testified to the presence of these elites at the critical juncture between voluntary endeavors and official politics. Nonetheless, the democratization of Germany's political system was the result of military defeat and popular unrest rather than of the activities of these intellectuals, who beheld these events with increasing distress.

The experience during the last two decades of the Wilhelmine Reich and – in particular, during the war – contributed to the emergence of a new type of public intellectual. Although involved in often acrimonious public debates, all these intellectuals sought direct or indirect forms of influence in public affairs. Their contributions, however, did not remain limited to analyses of German realities and conceptualizations of forms of societal organization that theoretically would solve the tension between private interest and the common good that industrialization and now parliamentarization had exacerbated. In fact, all these intellectuals – and here lays the far-reaching influence of Naumann – tried to transform their conceptualizations through practical experimentations into reality. Not surprisingly, therefore, the central nuclei of these two intellectual circles

were not a set of shared ideas but rather two educational institutes that provided the base for both conceptual and organizational experimentations.

The November Revolution was an abrupt awakening. For some, the collapse of the German Reich came like a shock. The conservative Catholic historian Martin Spahn appeared incapacitated to act by a depressive collapse¹⁶⁸ and also Naumann struggled to deal with the disappearance of the political system that *volente o nolente* had provided the frame of reference for all his reformist plans.¹⁶⁹ Others found in the emergency of the time a new impetus to action. Old liberals like Max Weber and Meinecke would participate in the constitutional debates. Jäckh – the organizer as always – would support a momentarily revitalized Naumann in his educational programs and establish new organizations in support of the “League of Nations.” The circle around Moeller-Bruck, Boehm, Eduard Stadtler, and Gleichen would see in post-revolutionary Germany the risk of returning to the old Wilhelmine decadence and meaninglessness after the *intermezzo* of the war, and thus frantically worked to maintain the state of emergency in German society.

For all, the post-war period and the Weimar Republic would become a laboratory of modernity, in which it was possible to conceptualize and experiment with different, alternative, and contrasting forms of societal organization. Paradoxically, all these conceptualizations would recognize the need to legitimize new political forms of societal organization in front of the masses. In a sense, therefore, the boundaries between democratic and undemocratic solutions to the tension between private interest and the common good were not as straightforward as the division of the political spectrum into a

¹⁶⁸ Eduard Stadtler, *Als Politischer Soldat, 1914-1918* (Düsseldorf: Neuer Zeitverlag, 1935), 175.

¹⁶⁹ Walter Struve, *Elites against Democracy: Leadership Ideals in Bourgeois Political Thought in Germany, 1890-1933* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 115.

continuum from the extreme right to the extreme left may suggest. The people (*Volk*) from accessory of the political discourse were now moved to the center of it. All new forms of societal organization had to consider this as a given. Political education, formation of independent and responsible leadership, creation of national consciousness, and perpetuation of the militant man became the goals (sometimes contrasting, often overlapping) of these two intellectual circles.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUALIZING DEMOCRACY BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND *VOLK*

By the end of the war, associational life once again seemed increasing domestic tensions because it was fragmented along milieu-lines and unable to bridge socio-economic individualism and communitarian values. Similarly, the Weimar Republic quickly lost its legitimacy as it was saddled with the consequences of the peace agreement, which included massive reparations and an admission of war guilt. The government, therefore, could hardly play the role of the protector of civil society. On the contrary, German intellectuals soon perceived the proportional system of representation as both a cause and product of Germany's internal fragmentation. In fact, the Weimar Republic's parliamentary system reinforced the perception that political parties – as products of different socio-moral milieus – merely expressed contrasting self-interests.

Nonetheless, out of a sense of personal responsibility toward the national community, Wilhelmine liberals actively participated in public debates and confronted the radically modified relationship between *Volk* and the individual. The republican form of state moved the “people” to the center of the political process, and abruptly transformed subjects into citizens. Hence, democrats had to address the crucial questions of people's political capacities, political leadership, and the formation of public opinion in a pluralistic society.¹ The new parliamentary democracy therefore had to solve the problem that – exacerbated by the war – had caused the collapse of the monarchic system, namely the integration of a pluralistic, industrial society into the state.

Consequently, Max Weber and Friedrich Meinecke drafted constitutional proposals

¹ Christoph Gusy, “Einleitung: Demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik – Entstehungsbedingungen und Vorfragen,” in *Demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik*, edited by Christoph Gusy (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000), 28-35. Cf. Margaret L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

and investigated the role of the republican presidency. Friedrich Naumann established the “Citizens School” in order to counter the lack of political consciousness and Ernst Troeltsch analyzed the German roots of democracy.

These intellectuals’ attitude towards the new democratic state was, however, not one of whole-hearted endorsement. Meinecke’s often-quoted statement – “I remain, facing the past, monarchist by heart and will become, turning to the future, republican by reason” – characterized a broad group of Wilhelmine liberals, the Republicans of Reason (or *Vernunftrepublikaner*).² These intellectuals supported the new political system out of a sense of political responsibility rather than of moral conviction. As the writings of Theodor Heuss will also show, these cultural elites turned their back to the monarchic system not because convinced of political democracy’s intrinsic superiority but rather because military defeat had deligitimized the German monarchy. Their republicanism was therefore pragmatic and grounded in a rational, intellectual choice.

By contrast, young conservatives posed as an extra-parliamentary force rejecting both party system and liberal state as foreign, un-German entities. Also aware of the new centrality of the *Volk*, they, however, conceptualized it as a unity, hence not considering it as a plurality of independent citizens. Accordingly, young conservatives saw true (rather than formal) democracy as the expression of a unified common will and tended to interpret social plurality and multiplicity of interests as disturbing factors for true democracy. By de-legitimizing the parliamentary system, young conservatives deprived society of intermediate venues able to institutionalize conflict and hence mediate between contrasting interests. Nationalism’s emphasis on social homogeneity, the notions of

² Friedrich Meinecke, “Verfassung und Verwaltung der deutschen Republik,” *Die neue Rundschau*, vol. 30 (January 1919), 2.

Gemeinschaft and corporatism, the elevation of the state to a “moral project,” and charismatic leadership offered ways to bypass existing political institutions and to create new channels of political legitimization.

Both circles of intellectuals at the center of this study strained to come to terms with the new post-war political context. Initially, the defeat and, most importantly, the communist threat offered a last opportunity of cooperation across political divides. By the summer of 1920, however, this initial commonality of intents paved the path to the conceptualization of radically contrasting forms of societal organization. In this period, acrimonious debates punctuated these intellectuals’ activities. While young conservatives rejected the parliamentary system *tout court*, the liberals of the Jäckh circle limited their attacks to the proportional system of representation. Ultimately, however, both intellectual circles continued viewing social fragmentation as the primary cause of Germany’s weakness.

Contrasting conceptualizations of societal organization thus dominated public discourse during the Weimar Republic. Both groups at the center of this study were aware of the monarchy’s inability to integrate all social forces into the nation. They did not disagree on the fundamental need to develop a more integrative social as well as political system. While at the center of both conceptualizations, the “people” or “nation” – identified with the ambiguous German word *Volk* – was either theorized as a unity and thus able of common will or as an entity necessarily fragmented in multiple conflicting groups and individualities.

Accordingly, I first analyze the crucial months between the armistice and the Treaty of Versailles. In this period, when hope and despair seemed deeply entangled,

German public intellectuals' activities and ideas developed against the backdrop of communist uprisings, the promises of Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points," and the "Diktat" of Versailles. Secondly, I analyze the understanding of democracy by the intellectuals that gradually formed the circle around Ernst Jäckh. These intellectuals accepted the new liberal, parliamentary system, although with some initial ambivalences. In their view, the new parliamentary democracy became the only form of state able to integrate all German social strata into the nation. Finally, I turn to young conservatives' alternative solutions and their attempts to find a path for Germany between Western liberal parliamentarism and Eastern Bolshevism. Young conservatives were unequivocal in their principled rejection of the pre-war social as well as political system. The revolutionary outburst of the winter of 1918-19 offered the opportunity to purify the German nation of all foreign influences, and in particular of a liberal political system that allegedly disrupted the unity of the German nation.

From the Armistice to Versailles: Associational Life between Hopes and Despair

In the months between the armistice and the Treaty of Versailles, national and international politics shaped the actions of Germany's public intellectuals and set the parameters of public debates. The Wilhelmine Empire's collapse had heightened the sense of individual responsibility toward the national community. At the same time, the still fluid new political system supported hopes in the possibility to influence the future development of both Germany's society and form of government. Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" and the "League of Nations" seemed to offer tools to counter the centrifugal forces that the communist uprisings of the winter of 1918-19 had awakened.

The Treaty of Versailles, however, was an abrupt awakening and would significantly influence the goals and strategies of German intellectuals and of their associations.

In these months, Germany's "crisis" seemed to clearly break with a burdensome past and the future appeared open to a range of possibilities. Emblematically, towards the end of the war, Naumann wrote, "the coming times lay ahead of us all like a wide fog, in which bright and dark areas wrestle." – Nonetheless, he noted, – "Such a palpitating foginess has something beautiful and intoxicating, conjures hope, expectations, [and] duties in a strange greatness."³ In November 1918, Moeller-Bruck also voiced similar hopes. The war had juxtaposed "young" and "old" nations, "A nation is young by acting on the world it creates out of the world it finds," and Germany, he asserted, embodied the ideal of the young nation.⁴ Both groups of intellectuals therefore interpreted the collapse of the old political system as the possibility for a new beginning.

Across the political spectrum, therefore, German elites repeatedly stressed the importance of taking individual responsibility. In a confidential note, a group of intellectuals stressed the necessity to take "responsibility for the country's destiny" and warned against "remain[ing] secluded, detached, and isolated." The signatories including Naumann, Meinecke, and Troeltsch placed themselves "at the disposal of the nation, its will, and its representatives" and aimed to constructively influence the course of events.⁵ Similarly, Gleichen, in a circular letter to the *Kulturbund's* members, stated that the current times required "everyone's general willingness to self-sacrificing individual

³ Friedrich Naumann, "Vier Reden an Junge Freunde," in Friedrich Naumann and Wilhelm Heile, *Erziehung zur Politik* (Berlin: Buchverlag der "Hilfe," 1918), 24.

⁴ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, "Das Recht der jungen Völker" (November, 1918), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 157.

⁵ Confidential Circular Letter, November 14, [1918], Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 226, Nr. 17.

effort, because only work can save Germany, can [save] our nation.”⁶ The old political system’s collapse provided the opportunity to mold Germany’s future political transformations, and this – all Germany’s elites acknowledged – required taking responsibility in the public sphere.

The communist uprisings of the winter of 1918-19 gave urgency to this general call to individual action. Repeatedly, liberal elites voiced their uneasiness with the revolutionary events. They condemned socialists’ incapacity to transform themselves from a “class-struggle party” into a “national party,”⁷ and doubted that the “civic peace” of August 1914 had ever existed.⁸ The communist revolution had broken the unity that the war had cemented, and signaled the definitive penetration of the masses in Germany’s political society.⁹ Hence, Wilhelmine liberals saw in the communist uprising not only the advent of the masses but also the victory of the Marxist ideology of “class struggle” over the nourished myth of the “civic peace.” Across the political spectrum, German intellectual elites agreed on the necessity to overcome the ideology of “class struggle” and that this primarily was a task for the cultural intelligentsia.¹⁰

Naumann recognized that the total war had awakened people’s political will and engagement. In the midst of the radical political transformation of the fall and winter of 1918, Naumann focused on the need for political education, which in his view could

⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen, Circular letter, January 25, 1919, p. 1. BArch, R 901/71075.

⁷ Wilhelm Heile, “Deutsche Demokratie,” *Die Hilfe*, no. 51 (December 19, 1918), 613-615. Some of these comments, however, must be considered against the background of the upcoming elections for the National Assembly. See also Friedrich Naumann, “Der neue Parlamentarismus,” *Die Hilfe*, no. 9 (February 27, 1919), 99-100 and Wilhelm Heile, “Die Politik der deutschen Demokratie,” *Die Hilfe*, no. 51 (December 18, 1919), 722-724.

⁸ Gertrud Bäumer, “Die Überwindung des Klassenkampfes,” *Die Hilfe*, vol. 24, issue 11 (1918), 117.

⁹ Gertrud Bäumer, “Die Seele der Revolution,” *Die Hilfe*, vol. 25, issue 15 (1919), 180 and Gertrud Bäumer, “Der Fluch der Masse,” *Die Hilfe*, vol. 25, issue 27 (1919), 347.

¹⁰ In a note significantly released on the same day as his call to action, Gleichen warned against the notion that the “idea” of Bolshevism coincided with the “means” of Bolshevism. He argued that with the military victory over Bolsheviks in Berlin, intellectuals’ task was to overcome Bolshevism as an idea. Heinrich von Gleichen, Circular letter, January 25, 1919. BArch, R 901/71075.

bridge parties' divisions and counter the Marxist ideology of "class struggle." It became therefore crucial to make the people familiar with the "apparatus of government."

As a pure spectator you stay inexperienced, and all appears strange and confused. Go to your club, in the humble little club of your district, sit there among the twenty or thirty men and women. As small as your district parliament is, it may still be the water chamber for important decisions if you take it seriously. All important movements started in a corner.¹¹

In fact, democracy required higher levels of political knowledge and participation because it transformed the individual into an active citizen. Herman Heller – who would become one of the most original thinkers associated with Jäckh's post-war circle – similarly stressed the necessity to transform "subjects" into citizens when they requested the "right of participation in the decision-making process of the state."¹²

Shocked by the revolutionary outbursts, Naumann viewed political education as the solution to German society's worrisome transformations. Naumann aimed to educate the masses to democracy because he feared communists' and independent socialists' influence on the soldiers returning from the front. He hoped to de-radicalize political conflicts by eliminating or reducing class antagonism, and hence to contain the Bolshevik threat. Indeed, as Max Weber had pointed out, the primary political task had to be allowing "returning soldiers to rebuild that Germany which they have saved – through the ballot in their hands and through their elected representatives."¹³ Naumann thus founded the "Citizens School" (*Staatsbürgerschule*) with Bosch's financial backing. The School opened its courses in the summer of 1918 and, between November 1918 and

¹¹ Friedrich Naumann, "Politische Pflicht" (1919), in *Werke*, vol. 5 (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964), 738-739.

¹² Hermann Heller, "Volkshochschule und Parteischule" (1919/20), in Herman Heller, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, edited by Christoph Müller with the collaboration of Sabine von Levetzow (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 601.

¹³ Weber, "Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany," 1381-1382.

January 1919, successfully attracted returning soldiers, hence significantly increasing its student body.¹⁴

While Naumann decisively turned to political education as a means to influence the German masses, within Gleichen's *Kulturbund*, Eduard Stadtler rapidly rose to notoriety as one of the most effective anti-Bolshevik public speakers and mobilizers. Stadtler's biography exemplifies the progressive transformation of a young, Catholic academic enthralled by the war into a "drummer" and organizer of anti-Bolshevik organizations. He had witnessed the Bolshevik Revolution as a war prisoner and, after his return to Germany in August 1918, Stadtler became a fierce advocate for an aggressive anti-Soviet policy.

In his public speeches, Stadtler repeatedly warned against the revolutionary threat in Germany, which in his view was following Russian patterns. On occasion of the first public event of Gleichen's newly founded "Coalition for National and Social Solidarity" (*Vereinigung für nationale und soziale Solidarität*), Stadtler argued that Germans must unite in order to avoid the spiritual as well as economic collapse that may accompany the revolution. He stated that a proletarian dictatorship could be avoided only by involving the working classes in the reconstruction of the state. Furthermore, he argued that in order to avoid a Sovietization of the economic system, Germany's elites had to recognize the collapse of nineteenth-century capitalism, and thus needed to establish a new, corporatist form of economic organization.¹⁵

¹⁴ Heuss, *Friedrich Naumann*, 440-441. Marxist historians have denounced Naumann's attempt to de-radicalize class conflicts and break the hold of socialism on the masses. See for example Wollkopf, *Zur Politischen Konzeption*, 2-7.

¹⁵ Eduard Stadtler, *Der Bolschewismus und seine Ueberwindung* (Berlin: Generalsekretariat zum Studium und zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus, 1918), 13-16. According to Stadtler, the speech was a success and immediately published by the *Europäischen Staats- und Wirtschaftszeitung*. At the beginning of

During the communist uprising in Berlin, Stadtler intensified his collaboration with Gleichen and established organizations aiming to mobilize and organize the masses against the communist influence. In December, Stadtler founded the “General Secretariat for the Study and Fight of Bolshevism” (*Generalsekretariat zum Studium und zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus*) and the “Anti-Bolshevist League” (*Antibolschewistische Liga*), which aimed to become an umbrella organization for like-minded groups. Even Naumann supported these endeavors with a contribution of 3,000 M from one of his political funds.¹⁶ The *Generalsekretariat* comprised three departments – scientific, propaganda, and press – to which a fourth charged with security and information tasks was soon added.¹⁷ The *Generalsekretariat* rapidly established local branches in several north-German cities,¹⁸ despite the authorities briefly shut the organization down at the beginning of December.¹⁹ At the same time, Stadtler secured substantial financial support from industrial circles and established a personal relationship with Hugo Stinnes.²⁰

In Stadtler’s strategy, the *Generalsekretariat* combined negative propaganda – that is, the rejection of Bolshevism – with constructive messages for Germany’s future. In a speech on January 25, 1919, Stadtler attacked the optimist conviction that German Bolshevism had been vanquished with the defeat of the communist uprising in Berlin. He contended that Bolshevism was the continuation of the “anarchic degradation process of the world war,” that is, the massification of society with the consequential uprooting of

December it became the first issue of the “Revolutionäre Streitfragen” (published by the Secretariat) and reached a circulation of 5000 numbers. Stadtler, *Als Politischer Soldat, 1914-1918*, 164-165.

¹⁶ Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 12-13.

¹⁷ Generalsekretariat zum Studium und zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus, *Aufruf zur Bildung einer antibolschewistischen Liga*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Brackmann, A., Nr. 50. See also Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 13-22 and 95-96.

¹⁸ Polizei-President to Staatskommissar für die Regelung der Wohlfahrtspflege in Preussen, May 19, 1919, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 191, Nr. 3855.

¹⁹ Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 23-26.

²⁰ Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 43-44, 46-49, and 56-57.

social order. In Germany, this process had taken the form of political chaos, economic dissolution, and radicalization of the masses. In Stadtler's analysis, therefore, only a strong political-military dictator able to resist the Russian army, a socialization of the economy, a renewal of Germans' national consciousness, and, most importantly, a peace policy between the Entente and Germany could avoid Bolshevism's victory in Germany.²¹

Stadtler's attempt to maintain this high level of alert failed, however, to convince his financial supporters. In addition, he was convinced of the necessity to turn to those ideas and principles that found expression in Bolshevism without, however, adopting Russian methods. In his inflammatory rhetoric aiming to establish a mass-based anti-Bolshevik movement he expressed therefore his approval of a council system that, by being corporatively rooted in society, could overcome nineteenth-century capitalism. In late January, he expressed a favorable opinion of the council system in a speech in front of 5,000 workers. His financial backers summoned Stadtler and only Stinnes's intervention could avoid a definitive rupture. Stadtler's activism contrasted with the interests of his financial supporters after the definitive defeat of the communist uprising and the progressive channeling of internal tensions into the National Assembly's constitutional debates. By the end of March, Stadtler had to renounce the leadership of the "Anti-Bolshevist League."²²

The activities of Naumann and Stadtler testify to the fundamental agreement over the new role of the masses in the political process. Whether stressing the need to educate

²¹ Eduard Stadtler, *Ist Spartakus besiegt? Der Bolschewismus als Weltproblem* (Berlin: Generalsekretariat zum Studium und zur Bekämpfung des Bolschewismus, 1919). Quotation on page 6. In his autobiography, Stadtler dates this speech January 23. Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 60.

²² Stadtler, *Als Antibolschewist, 1918-1919*, 70, 115-116, and 123-124.

them to democracy or to mobilize them against the communist threat, both Naumann and Stadtler recognized the fundamental transformation of Germany's political society. Intellectual elites also shared concerns with the radicalization of class differences in Germany's post-war society, as Naumann's financial support to Stadtler's activities shows. Initially, the fear of Bolshevism unified previously separated strata of society and pushed the bourgeoisie to self-organize.²³

Nonetheless, old and new associations soon strained in adapting to the rapidly changing political framework. The *Volksbund* and Ernst Jäckh's new endeavor, the newly established "German League for the League of Nations" (*Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund*), pinpoint the problems of German intellectual elites' efforts. The *Volksbund*'s dejected final stages and its leadership's inability to transform the organization into a pillar of the new republican state symbolized the ephemeral nature of the cross-partisan unity that had re-emerged during the winter of 1918-19. Conversely, the "German League" pointed to the strictures on Germany's public discourse. Unanimously, German public intellectuals condemned the Treaty of Versailles. Paradoxically, however, an event that aroused the nationalism of intellectuals and of the nation at large also widened the rupture between the two circles of intellectuals at the center of this study.

The *Volksbund*'s leadership struggled in keeping its association alive and in adapting its mission to the new political context without losing its influential sponsors. In November 1918, Francke had argued that the *Volksbund*'s new task was to "negotiate contrasts, which can emerge and have emerged between the different strata of the

²³ See for instance Carl H. Becker to Tante Emma, November 17, 1918, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. N1 Becker, C. H., Nr. 8683.

nation.”²⁴ Nonetheless, the executive committee disagreed on the organization’s future goals, although an internal survey had showed that the majority of its leading members favored maintaining the organization.²⁵ In fact, some pointed to the dangers of a backlash following the revolution and Adolf Grabowsky explicitly warned against the Bolshevik threat. Conversely, the Free Trade Unions requested the *Volksbund*’s liquidation because it had lost its reason of existence with the revolution and Fatherland Party’s demise.²⁶ Even Bosch withdrew his financial support in August 1919 because he considered the organization’s purpose fulfilled.²⁷

As a result, the *Volksbund* shunned controversial domestic activities and turned to the idea of the League of Nations, which appeared “neutral” and thus politically safe. Therefore, the secretary of the *Volksbund*, Martin Wenck offered the organization’s cooperation to the “German League for the League of Nations.”²⁸ The nature of this offer, however, again confirmed the *Volksbund*’s internal tensions. In fact, the decision to assist the “German League for the League of Nations” rather than directly supporting the League of Nations was rooted in the necessity to avoid possible disagreements with the Free Trade Unions.²⁹

The leadership of the organization strained to develop a politically integrative role in a rapidly changing political context. In September 1919, in a confidential meeting held in the rooms of the “German Society 1914,” Minister of the Interior Eduard David

²⁴ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 29. November 1918, p. 1, BArch, R 8057/2.

²⁵ Martin Wenck, Circular Letter, January 23, 1919, BArch, R 8057/4.

²⁶ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 29. November 1918, pp. 2-5. BArch, R 8057/2.

²⁷ Robert Bosch to Ernst Francke, August 8, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5 and Ernst Francke to Robert Bosch, August 27, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5.

²⁸ Martin Wenck to Ernst Jäckh, December 28, 1918, BArch, R 8057/10.

²⁹ Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 11. Oktober 1918, BArch, R 8057/2. See also Komitee zur Propaganda des Verständnisses in Deutschland für den Völkerbund, Niederschrift der Sitzung, BArch, R 8057/9, p. 22 and Niederschrift aus der Vorstandssitzung vom 22. Oktober 1918, BArch, R 8057/2.

suggested using the *Volksbund* as a nonpartisan organization to instill a democratic attitude in the population.³⁰ The *Volksbund* contacted Jäckh as a way of indirectly inquiring whether Bosch would support these revised goals.³¹ Jäckh replied in the negative and advised against contacting Bosch.³² Frantically, the *Volksbund*'s leadership discussed the organization's chances of survival without the support of the trade unions and its greatest donor,³³ and sought out new sources of financial support.³⁴

A public assembly on December 7, 1919, however, confirmed the general lack of interest in the *Volksbund*. Neither the press nor Berlin's mayor – who refused to speak at the assembly – showed interest in the event, and Wenck wryly noted, “the *Volksbund* does not have an appeal any more. ... We can do what we want: the enterprise does not attract any more.”³⁵ Thus, in a poorly attended meeting,³⁶ the Board of Directors decided to liquidate the *Volksbund* because the Revolution had accomplished its original goals and new goals had neither found personal nor financial support.³⁷ In January 1920, the *Volksbund* ended its activities,³⁸ after balancing its deficit with a small grant from Bosch.³⁹

The lack of coherence over possible new goals had rapidly relegated the *Volksbund* to a marginal role in Germany's public spheres. The eventual demise of the

³⁰ Martin Wenck to Ernst Jäckh, October 6, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5.

³¹ Martin Wenck to Ernst Jäckh, October 6, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5 and Martin Wenck to Ernst Francke, October 7, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5.

³² Ernst Jäckh to Martin Wenck, October 8, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5 and Martin Wenck to Ernst Francke, October 10, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5.

³³ Martin Wenck to Vorstandsmitglieder, October 13, 1919, BArch, R 8057/4.

³⁴ Martin Wenck to Ernst Francke, October 18, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5.

³⁵ Martin Wenck to Ernst Francke, December 10, 1919, p. 2. BArch, R 8057/7.

³⁶ Martin Wenck to Ernst Francke, December 20, 1919, BArch, R 8057/7.

³⁷ Martin Wenck to Ausschussmitglieder des Volksbund für Freiheit und Vaterland, December 22, 1919, BArch, R 8057/7.

³⁸ Martin Wenck, An die Mitglieder des Volksbundes für Freiheit und Vaterland, January, 1920, BArch, R 8057/7.

³⁹ Martin Wenck to Privatsekretariat des Herrn Robert Bosch, January 12, 1920, BArch, R 8057/7.

organization testified to German intellectual elites' inability to bridge political as well as ideological differences. Like Stadtler's exclusion from the "Anti-Bolshevist League," the liquidation of the *Volksbund* showed that the Bolshevik threat had lost its unifying appeal with the end of the emergency situation in Berlin, as the debates on the organization's future goals confirmed. In addition, the financial negotiations with Bosch undoubtedly confirmed Ernst Jäckh's central role in the liberal nationalists' associational network. Paralleling the *Volksbund's* demise, Jäckh emerged as an energetic organizer at the center of the liberal milieu. His Naumannian nationalism influenced his activities in the critical months around the Treaty of Versailles.

To a large degree, German intellectuals' hopes had rested on the American President's proclaimed principle of self-determination. The publication of the peace terms on May 7, 1919, however, dissipated the hope that Wilson's "Fourteen Points" would provide the framework for the Allied peace conditions.⁴⁰ Under shock, the German government headed by the Social Democrat Philipp Scheidemann declared the conditions unacceptable and resigned, thus refusing to sign the peace treaty. A nationalist outrage swept over Germany in the weeks preceding the acceptance of the peace conditions. The new government signed the Versailles Treaty amid the protests not only of the nationalist forces but also of the liberal-democratic circles. Heuss later described the Treaty as a "continuation of war by other means,"⁴¹ and young conservatives viewed the Treaty as

⁴⁰ The peace settlement imposed territorial losses (most notably Alsace-Lorraine and the "Polish corridor"), limitation of sovereignty with the occupation of the Rhineland, the demilitarization of the west bank of the Rhine as well as limits to Germany's army, navy, and military equipment, Germany's war responsibility (the "war guilt clause"), and reparation (whose exact amount was left to the victors to decide). Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, chapter 3.

⁴¹ Theodor Heuss, *Staat und Volk. Betrachtungen über Wirtschaft, Politik und Kultur* (Berlin: Deutsche Buch-Gemeinschaft, 1926), 296.

the Entente's tool to destroy Germany.⁴² Large sections of German society, therefore, viewed the "League of Nations" as the product of the Treaty of Versailles and merely a tool of the victorious states.⁴³

The "German League for the League of Nations" was thus devoted to a highly contentious political goal, namely Germany's membership in the "League of Nations." Established on December 17, 1918, it aimed to support the idea of the "League of Nation" and to foster the cooperation among like-minded organizations in Germany and abroad.⁴⁴ The domestic focus of the organization, however, led to a certain degree of ambivalence. In fact, the founding members recognized that the organization could not achieve its goals under the leadership of pacifists. Consequentially, they decided to open its ranks to both "real pacifists" and "opportunists."⁴⁵ Under Jäckh's directorship and with the Foreign Office's endorsement,⁴⁶ the organization aimed to root the idea of the "League of Nations" in the German masses by reaching out to a broad network of institutional member organizations.⁴⁷

⁴² Hans Röseler, "Der Zerfall Deutschlands," *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 9 (June 10, 1919), 1, Hutten, "Ende und Anfang," *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 6 (February 11, 1920), 1, Heinrich von Gleichen, Circular Letter, May 9, 1919. GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76 Vc, Sekt. 1, Tit. XI, Teil 1, Nr. 54, and Martin Spahn, "Das Friedensdiktat und die deutsche Politik," *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 2 (January 12, 1921), 1.

⁴³ The writings of Otto Hoetzsch – who was close both to the Jäckh circle and to the young conservatives – confirm the general agreement in condemning the Treaty of Versailles. He argued that the League could not guarantee peace because, by being the product of Versailles, it was the guarantor of the status quo. The League of Nations was not universal because the United States, Russia, other non-European countries, and – most significantly – the defeated nations did not join it. Furthermore, because the result of the Versailles Treaty, the League itself was the root of potential conflicts and war. For a good summary see Otto Hoetzsch, "Der Gedanke des Völkerbundes als einer zwischenstaatlichen Organisation und seine Fassung durch Versailles," in *Zehn Jahre Versailles*, vol. 2, edited by Heinrich Schnee and Hans Draeger (Berlin: Brückenverlag G.M.B.H., 1929), 67-69.

⁴⁴ Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund, *Satzung*, August 16, 1919, p. 1. Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26394.

⁴⁵ Minutes, Members' Meeting, December 20, 1918, p. 1. Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26394.

⁴⁶ Ernst Jäckh to Amtsgericht Charlottenburg, April 30, 1919. Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 26394.

⁴⁷ Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund, *Bericht über das Jahr 1919* (Berlin: Mittler & Sohn, December 1919). BArch, R 58/6278a.

The leadership of the “German League” considered the “League of Nations” a tool for the revision of the peace treaty. The Board of Directors expressed the hope, during a meeting that was significantly held in Versailles, that the “League of Nations” would protect Germany.⁴⁸ On the magazine of the “German League,” Delbrück argued that, by creating the “League of Nations,” the Treaty of Versailles had provided Germany with the tool to achieve its only possible foreign policy goal, that is, the revision of the treaty.⁴⁹ The “German League” therefore sought to prepare the path for a revision of the Versailles Treaty based on the rule of international law.⁵⁰ To this end, the organization initially aimed to counter the general lack of knowledge about the Treaty of Versailles by publishing an edited version of the Treaty at a low price.⁵¹ In addition, it published a series of booklets under the title “The Burden of Peace,” which intended to expose “the monstrosity of the peace.”⁵² Through its network, the “German League” supported the Foreign Office in distributing material on the Versailles Treaty and the necessity of its revision.⁵³

The Treaty of Versailles gave a significant nationalist turn to public discourse.

The nationalist language and the actions of the leadership of the “German League” show

⁴⁸ Hans Simons to Matthias Erzberger, May 31, 1919, p. 1. BArch, R 904/478. The meeting was held in Versailles because Jäckh was participating in the peace negotiations as a member of the German delegation.

⁴⁹ Hans Delbrück, “Friede – und was nun?” *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Liga für Völkerbund*, A. 10. 1. 1920, BArch, R 904/478. See also Ernst Jäckh, “Die Ordnung der Welt – Die Aufgabe des Friedens,” *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Liga für Völkerbund*, B. 10. 1. 1920, BArch, R 904/478 and Johannes Tiedje to D[iedrich] Bischoff, April 7, 1919, p. 3. BArch, R 58/6278a.

⁵⁰ Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund to Friedrich Meinecke, December 18, 1919, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Meinecke, F., Nr. 8. At a certain point, the organization’s leadership even expressed the hope that Germany’s membership in the League of Nations would lead to a restoration of Germany’s colonial power. Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund, Circular Letter, July 1922, BArch, R 58/6278a.

⁵¹ Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund to Carl H. Becker, February 28, 1921, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 195.

⁵² Maximilian Müller-Jabusch to Bücherreferat des Auswärtigen Amts, February 4, 1920, BArch, R 901/72046.

⁵³ Hans Simons to Bücherreferat des Auswärtigen Amts, July 2, 1920, BArch, R 901/72046 and Bücherreferat des Auswärtigen Amts to Deutsche Liga für Völkerbund, July 8, 1920, BArch, R 901/72046.

the pragmatic centrality of nationalist discourse in liberals' thought. The parallel debates on the *Volksbund*'s goals, however, reveal the different centrality of nationalism in the conceptualizations of societal organization of the intellectuals at the center of this study. Within the *Volksbund*, the conservative Grabowsky advocated for the transformation of the organization into a "Culture Congress," which would emphasize Germany's cultural legacy and hence support international understanding. Emblematically, he argued that such a plan would win the support of those personalities who, like himself, did not support the current government.⁵⁴ This proposal exemplified conservative and nationalist intellectuals' attempt to strengthen the cultural bonds between Germany and the territories that had been lost after the war through an emphasis on German national as well as cultural values.

The societal fragmentation that accompanied domestic conflicts' radicalization in the aftermath of the war paralleled the breaking of German national unity, which the territorial losses decided at Versailles had caused. The celebration of an original national unity beyond state's borders, the concern with the fate of Germans living abroad, and the appeal to the principle of self-determination became central *topoi* in young conservatives' writings.⁵⁵ As in the years preceding the war, nationalism offered notions of "pre-political" unity able to transcend political differences. In the momentous months after the armistice, the principle of national self-determination contained the promise of solving

⁵⁴ Adolf Grabowsky to Martin Wenck, October 21, 1919, BArch, R 8057/5. See also Martin Wenck to Eduard David, November 8, 1919, BArch, R 8057/7.

⁵⁵ To a certain degree these themes appeared also in the analyses of the liberals of the Jäckh circle. Heuss for example argued that a policy of irredentism and of national self-determination must be the central content of the new government's foreign policy. Theodor Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie* (Berlin: Karl Siegmund, 1920), 142. While Heuss did not remain trapped in the slippery slope of the Irredentist discourse, in a volume analyzing the Versailles Treaty's consequences published in the late 1920s he still discussed the fate of the *Auslandsdeutsche* during and in the aftermath of the war. Theodor Heuss, "Das Schicksal der Auslandsdeutschen," in *Zehn Jahre Versailles*, vol. 2, edited by Heinrich Schnee and Hans Draeger (Berlin: Brückenverlag G.M.B.H., 1929), 25-46.

domestic contrasts on the ground of a national union of all Germanic people.

Consequently, the concepts of *Mitteleuropa*, “Greater-Germany” (*Großdeutschland*), and “Germans living abroad” (*Auslandsdeutsche*) dominated the political discourse.

The young-conservative ideologue Max H. Boehm most consistently developed the concept of Irredentism and *Volk*. In 1923, with *Europa Irredenta*, he investigated the origins of the World War and analyzed the Versailles Treaty from the perspective of “Irredentism.” He asserted the impossibility of reestablishing the congruence between state borders and *Volk* borders and thus advocated a Central European federation under German leadership.⁵⁶ On occasion of the 75th anniversary of the revolution of 1848, Boehm decried Germany’s current condition and the inability of its politicians to recognize Germany’s role in central and east Europe.⁵⁷ He blamed French foreign policy and the revolutionary government of 1918 for the failure of uniting Austria and Germany and emphasized the contradictions between the principle of self-determination and the will of the victorious nations. He argued that to achieve the *Großdeutschland* it would be necessary to awaken the “greater-German will” in all Germans.⁵⁸

As a result, this international context modified the relationship between foreign and domestic policy. Wilhelmine reformers’ emphasis on foreign policy led them to stress Germany’s domestic problems. In line with the Naumannian tradition, a strong foreign policy depended on the strength of the national body. In contemporary Germany, however, Troeltsch decried the tendency to use international matters primarily as

⁵⁶ Max H. Boehm, *Europa Irredenta: eine Einführung in das Nationalitätenproblem der Gegenwart* (Berlin: R. Hobbing, 1923).

⁵⁷ Max H. Boehm, “Großdeutsche Machtwerdung,” *Gewissen*, vol. 5, no. 20 (May 21, 1923), 1-3. On the centrality of Germany in Europe see also Martin Spahn, “Mitteleuropa,” *Volk und Reich* (April-May, 1925), 2-38.

⁵⁸ Max H. Boehm, “Großdeutsche Vorarbeit – an uns selber,” *Großdeutsche Blätter*, vol. 1 (1924), 4-5. See also Max H. Boehm, *Grenzdeutsch – Großdeutsch: Vortrag anlässlich der Hauptausschßtagung des B.D.A. im November 1924* (Dresden: Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1925).

weapons in domestic political fights, hence stressing once again the fragmentation of Germany's political arena. Accordingly, he advocated for the "strengthening of internal relationships."⁵⁹ As a result of the Versailles Treaty, Heuss noted, "All foreign policy, which is not only fantasy or noise but rather has a validity, concentrates in the foreseeable future on the domestic [policy], on the possibility and the timing of the national and economic consolidation."⁶⁰ Liberals thus concluded that a real foreign policy would be impossible in the foreseeable future.

Young conservatives restated foreign policy's primacy and condemned the focus on domestic disputes. Nonetheless, they noted the necessities of party politics' doctrinism and fragmentation. Moeller-Bruck condemned Germans' narrow-mindedness and decried the lack of political knowledge and expertise.⁶¹ This required political education and a focus on the younger generations.⁶² Similarly, Spahn linked "good domestic policy" to the "best foreign policy," thus stressing the necessity "To renew ourselves and restore our health at home" in order to be seize any opportunity to re-establish Germany's international status.⁶³

The fragmentation that had characterized Wilhelmine society reemerged with new strength in the months following the armistice. Associations formed in the context of the war struggled in adapting to this transformed socio-political environment. At the same time, new organizations reacted to the political challenges of the time but were unable to cross party lines beyond the initial emotional reaction that first Bolshevism and then the

⁵⁹ Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 252 and 291.

⁶⁰ Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie*, 138. See also Meinecke, "Verfassung und Verwaltung der deutschen Republik," 4.

⁶¹ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, "Das Laster der Innenpolitik" (November 20, 1922), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 136.

⁶² Moeller-Bruck, "Das Laster der Innenpolitik," 136-138.

⁶³ Spahn, "Das Friedensdiktat und die deutsche Politik," 2.

Treaty of Versailles had generated. In this fluid context, both liberals and young conservatives developed contrasting forms of societal organization, which were rooted in radically different notions of state, *Volk*, and individual.

German Democracy, the Weimar Republic, and the Parliamentary System

The intellectuals close to Friedrich Naumann and Max Weber were torn between the shock for the sudden collapse and the need to find their own personal way of dealing with the new democratic system. Naumann, Weber, and Meinecke actively participated in constitutional debates in the months following the German Empire's collapse.

The dualism between an elected president and an equally elected parliament characterized the organization of the new German state. The new Constitution, which came into effect on August 11, 1919, included a first section (Art. 1-108) detailing the organization of the Reich government and its federative system and a second one (Art. 109-165) listing basic individual rights.⁶⁴ Both Weber and Meinecke consistently argued that a strong head of state was a necessary counter-force to the fragmentation of the party-dominated parliament. For these old Wilhelmine liberals, a strong executive in the hands of a president had to be protected from fluctuating parliamentary majorities.⁶⁵ In fact, Weber contended that only an elected president would be able to resist the particularistic pressures of the Federal Chamber, balance the proportional system and Prussia's head of state, and provide a system for the selection of political leadership

⁶⁴ For a general overview see Hans Boldt, "Die Weimarer Reichsverfassung," in *Die Weimarer Republik, 1918-1933: Politik, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, edited by Karl Dietrich Bracher, Manfred Funke, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1987), 44-62. See also Jörg-Detlef Kühne, "Demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Verfassungs-diskussion – Hugo Preuß und die Nationalversammlung," in *Demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik*, edited by Christoph Gusy (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000), 115-133.

⁶⁵ Max Weber, "The President of the Reich" (1919), in *Political Writings*, edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 304-308 and Meinecke, "Verfassung und Verwaltung der deutschen Republik," 1-16.

within political parties.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, aware of the risks of a dictatorship in a Bolshevik or fascist style, Meinecke posed it as the German task to find a “trust dictatorship” able to solve a problem that was common to all Europe.⁶⁷

Naumann, Weber, and Meinecke profoundly influenced the circle around Jäckh. The case of Heuss is typical. Influenced by Naumann and Weber, he conceptualized politics as a struggle for power and maintained a relativist approach to political systems. Heuss had neither supported revolutionary change nor rejected the monarchical principle,⁶⁸ although he had been critical of Imperial Germany and advocated for reforms before the war.⁶⁹ In his analysis, democracy had become a historical necessity without credible alternatives after the monarchy’s failure to survive the war’s challenge.⁷⁰ Like his mentors, therefore, he approached the new democratic system with caution and out of reason rather than of inner conviction.

Heuss was, however, aware of the socio-political conflicts characterizing modern, industrial societies. Therefore, he viewed democracy as a “power-system,” which was rooted in the transferring of authority rather than in the idea of “government by the

⁶⁶ Weber, “The President of the Reich,” 304-308. The Weimar Constitution had strengthened the position of the elected *Reichstag*, on whose support the government depended. At the same time, the Federal Chamber’s (*Reichsrat*) influence was reduced (although it maintained the power of suspensive veto against the legislative). The president represented a counterforce to the *Reichstag* with his emergency powers and executive powers (e.g. power to dissolve the parliament and the government). The debate on the federal system, however, was deadlocked. The problem was the role of Prussia, which comprised three fifth of Germany’s territory as well as population. In fact, the attempt to break Prussia’s unity was resisted by the regional states, and the problem of whether clearly separate Reich government and the Prussian state (hence, risking the juxtaposition between the central government and one powerful state) or entangling the two governments as had been the case before the war (thus, however, risking that Germany was ruled by Prussia) was not solved. Boldt, “Die Weimarer Reichsverfassung,” 52-55.

⁶⁷ Friedrich Meinecke, *Republik, Bürgertum und Jugend. Vortrag gehalten im Demokratischen Studentenbund zu Berlin am 16 Januar 1925* (Frankfurt am Mein: Frankfurter Societäts-Druckerei, 1925), 21-23.

⁶⁸ See Theodor Heuss, “Es bleibt beim Alten,” *Die Hilfe*, no. 51 (December 20, 1918), 1612-1614 and Theodor Heuss, “Schwarz-Rot-Gold,” *Die Hilfe*, no. 47 (November 22, 1918), 1475-1479.

⁶⁹ On Heuss’s activities before the war see Jürgen C. Heß, *Theodor Heuss vor 1933. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des demokratischen Denkens in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1973), 21-42.

⁷⁰ Theodor Heuss, *Deutschlands Zukunft* (Stuttgart: Engelhorns, 1919), 10-11.

people.” From this perspective, he saw the value of the majority principle not in its intrinsic rightness but in its contained possibility of “self-correction,” that is, that today’s majorities might be tomorrow’s minorities.⁷¹ Consequently, he acknowledged the importance of political parties, which he considered “the channel for the formation of the political will of the nation” and, by being placed “in the indispensable mediating role of a multitude of individual opinions and wishes, ... a tool for national education.”⁷² Ultimately, therefore, Heuss assigned the role of mediating between conflicting and competing interests in society to the republic’s intermediary institutions.

Heuss exemplifies the position of this younger generation of public intellectuals. He witnessed the old political system’s collapse with uneasiness and worried about political society’s massification. Emblematically, however, he aimed to both provide political knowledge and fight political resignation and passivity with his writing in the immediate aftermath of the war. By analyzing Germany’s future, he dismissed political alternative to democracy, whose German roots he traced back to Tacitus and Immanuel Kant, and explained the tensions between capitalism and socialism as well as between nationalism and internationalism.⁷³ Heuss therefore typifies the in-between intellectual who aimed to enlighten the masses by simplifying the theoretical frameworks that Naumann, Meinecke, Weber, and Troeltsch developed.

The German Empire’s collapse and the revolution had broken the historical narrative legitimizing the German state, thus posing new tasks to scholars and

⁷¹ See for example Theodor Heuss, “Demokratie und Parlamentarismus: ihre Geschichte, ihre Gegner und ihre Zukunft,” in *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Republik. Ein Handbuch republikanischer Politik*, edited by Anton Erkelenz (Berlin: Sieben Stäbe-Verlags- und Druckerei Gesellschaft, 1928), 98-117.

⁷² Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie*, 59 and 64-65.

⁷³ Heuss, *Deutschlands Zukunft, Zwischen Gestern und Morgen* (Stuttgart: Engelhorn, 1919), and *Die neue Demokratie*. Eckstein, however, stresses that these books never reached high levels of distribution. Modris Eksteins, *Theodor Heuss und die Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1969), 37-38.

intellectuals. In fact, as Prussia's Minister of Education Carl H. Becker later noted, to these intellectuals "the unspoken, in part even unconscious intention remains the justification of our national existence on the basis of old lore."⁷⁴ Indeed, while "the legend of the past gave the old state, independently from the nature and the value of its representatives, a strong ethos," Heuss recognized that "today the bands are torn up and out of ourselves must emerge the courage for the new" because the past can "transform itself to the bonds of the becoming." Hence, he urged Germans to understand the democratic lessons of Germany's bourgeois revolution of 1848.⁷⁵

Accordingly, the reformers investigated the roots of Germany's democratic tradition and rejected the idea of an unbridgeable gap between western and German political traditions. Troeltsch argued that democracy did not come to Germany "overnight," but was the natural outcome of modern developments that Prussia's military system had blocked in Germany since 1848. Today, however, he claimed, democracy was neither "a pure political-moral question of principles nor a means of warfare of upcoming social strata" but rather a practical necessity.⁷⁶ During the chaotic days of the German revolution Troeltsch argued that democracy had an enormous potential but also dangerous anarchic tendencies, as it may foster interests-based struggles. Therefore, a German democracy could neither be the product of doctrinism nor the "realization of bare political forms," but required a modification of social relationships.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Carl H. Becker, "Internationaler Gedanke und nationale Erziehung" (1928), in *Internationale Wissenschaft und nationale Bildung: ausgewählte Schriften*, edited by Guido Müller (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1997), 363.

⁷⁵ Heuss, *Deutschlands Zukunft*, 5 and 3.

⁷⁶ Ernst Troeltsch, "Die deutsche Demokratie" (December 29, 1918), in Ernst Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe. Aufsätze über die deutsche Revolution und die Weltpolitik, 1918/22* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), 305-306.

⁷⁷ Troeltsch, "Die deutsche Demokratie," 306-308.

Both Troeltsch and Meinecke – in what appeared a combined endorsement of democracy by old Wilhelmine liberals – dismissed the notion of Germany’s lack of a democratic tradition as inconsistent. In particular Troeltsch analyzed the roots of the moral and philosophical divide between Germany and Western Europe. He asserted that German ideology was based on the notion of different-peculiar individualities and individualizing forces, whereas the French Revolution introduced a radical idea of progress and people’s sovereignty. He acknowledged that the concepts of individual responsibility and independence of the person were underdeveloped in Germany. Troeltsch thus concluded that Germany must not repudiate its history, but rather adapt its “ideology to today’s profoundly changed world context.”⁷⁸

Democracy’s problem depended on political radicalization and societal fragmentation rather than on German democratic tradition’s weakness or Germans’ non-political character. The liberal economist Moritz J. Bonn argued that Imperial Germany’s collapse had transformed the German parliament from a “united representation of the people against the Crown” to a “representation of the different interests represented, bitterly fighting each other.”⁷⁹ Perceptively, already in August 1919, Troeltsch had noted the radicalization of political conflicts, which found its origin in the fears the revolution had aroused in the bourgeois classes.⁸⁰ Two years later, he pointed to the common belief that only violent means could solve conflicts.⁸¹

It is not yet characteristic of the German to consider the noise of the political campaign as an indispensable hoopla that, once done its part,

⁷⁸ Ernst Troeltsch, *Naturrecht und Humanität in der Weltpolitik* (Berlin: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1923). Quotation on page 22. See also Meinecke, *Republik, Bürgertum und Jugend*, 10-12 and Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie*, 11-12.

⁷⁹ Moritz J. Bonn, *The Crisis of European Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), 7 and 8.

⁸⁰ Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 79-80.

⁸¹ Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 208-209.

should not anymore be taken seriously. So far, he loves the bullheaded hatred and aggressive blustering, which makes any political cooperation in the aftermath impossible but provides great personal satisfaction to complacent pigheaded fellows.⁸²

This radicalization of political discourse stemmed from society's fragmentation. Naumann and other Wilhelmine reformers had recognized the dangers of German society's divisiveness. They had failed to integrate the working class into the national body, and – as Gertrud Bäumer had noted – the revolution had revealed the illusionary nature of the “civic peace.” By referring to Naumann's pre-war efforts, Meinecke argued that, with the monarchy's failure of linking the masses to the state during the war, Germany needed a constitutional form able to create a greater coherence between state and masses.⁸³ Bäumer had urged to dissolve this mass on the grounds of democracy because “the subject of the state eventually must be the person, not the masses.”⁸⁴ Hence, these liberal intellectuals were aware that Germany's problems were rooted in the traditional confessional fragmentation and the socio-economic divisions that had limited Germany's unity, and which the war had further exacerbated.⁸⁵

The proportional electoral system and party politics appeared to enhance this radicalization and fragmentation. The proportional system was an obstacle to the formation of a strong majority. Germany's parliamentary system thus seemed to be in a “permanent deadlock” and a “never-ceasing haggling over economic points and a

⁸² Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 144.

⁸³ Friedrich Meinecke, “Zweiter Referat,” in *Die deutschen Universitäten und der heutige Staat*, edited by Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich Meinecke, and Gustav Radbruch (Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), 23-25.

⁸⁴ Bäumer, “Der Fluch der Masse,” 347.

⁸⁵ In the volume celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the German School of Politics, Fritz Poetzsch-Heffter pinpointed with unusual clarity these dynamics. Fritz Poetzsch-Heffter, “Die Erziehung zum Deutschen Staat,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 56-59.

preponderance of purely materialistic interests,” which discredited these institutions “among the men of action and the dreamers of dreams.”⁸⁶ In addition, as Heuss repeatedly argued, German political parties differed from their Western counterparts because, constituted in a pre-parliamentary and conflict-ridden period, they developed an extreme “doctrinism” as a result of their inability to participate directly in political decisions, and hence “the programmatic energy was reinforced, built up, stiffened in order to maintain alive and pure the promotional nature of the idea.”⁸⁷ While during the war politics had been interpreted as politicization and thus mobilization for the national cause, after the war politics was equated with party politics and thus at the origins of society’s political fragmentation. This reduction of politics to party politics and thus to a struggle between conflicting interests was the outcome of the politicization of the entire life during the total war.⁸⁸

For these intellectuals, the proportional system and the intertwining of political parties and economic interests became factionalism’s major cause. Bonn argued that, in the absence of political education, economic considerations would dominate political life and – accordingly – fragment Germany along economic interests.⁸⁹ Also Heuss argued that, while all political parties traditionally had claimed to represent all the population, the influence of Marxism – with its emphasis on public action’s socio-economic goals – and the emergence of economic interests led to a “materialization of politics.” The proportional system – he continued – had caused this intermingling of political parties

⁸⁶ Moritz J. Bonn, “The Crisis of German Democracy,” *The Forum*, vol. 72, no. 3 (May 1924), 313-314.

⁸⁷ Theodor Heuss, “Parteien und Bünde,” *Wille und Weg* (April 15, 1928), in *Politiker und Publizist. Aufsätze und Reden* (Tübingen: Wunderlich, 1984), 178.

⁸⁸ See for example Hans Simons, *Politische Schulung und Hochschule: Nach einem im Deutschen Auslandsinstitut in Stuttgart gehaltenen Vortrag* (Berlin: Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, 1926), 3 and Carl H. Becker, “Geleitewort,” in *Politische Propädeutik als Erziehungsfaktor, Band 1*, edited by Johann Strunz (Leipzig: B. G. Tuebner, 1930), iii-iv.

⁸⁹ Bonn, “The Crisis of German Democracy,” 311-313.

and economic interests. Doctrinism and multitude characterized Germany's system of representation, which stood in sharp contrast to a two-party system and its ability to integrate all tendencies and factions. As a result, Germany's political society had, "unconsciously, sacrificed the system of rule to the search for ideal justice."⁹⁰ Hence, the proportional system as a technique designed to assess the will of the people was transformed into a tool fragmenting this will and thus jamming the political system. Accordingly, the Jäckh circle emphasized the importance of political engagement because "the fate of the nation compels each and every citizen to political activity, if he does not want to experience and soon personally feel that from a subject of politics he becomes only its object."⁹¹

The liberals around Naumann's and later Jäckh's endeavors beheld the collapse of Imperial Germany and the communist revolution with a mixture of distress and expectation. Ambivalently, they endorsed the new parliamentary republic because of monarchy's failures, rather than out of principled conviction. Nonetheless, they supported the new democratic state and trusted in the new political system's ability in preserving and enhancing individual responsibility and liberty. These intellectuals sought the roots of Germany's democratic tradition in the past, although acknowledging alternative cultural-political traditions. Consequentially, the greatest weakness of Germany's society was not the lack of democratic tradition but rather the radicalization of political discourse in the aftermath of the war and the communist revolution. Voluntary associations' failure to establish a culture of compromise and the inability of the new republican state to integrate Germany's factionalized political society pushed these intellectuals to seek new

⁹⁰ Heuss, *Staat und Volk*, 157-158.

⁹¹ Ernst Jäckh, "Zwei Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik," in Ernst Troeltsch, *Naturrecht und Humanität in der Weltpolitik* (Berlin: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1923), 26.

solutions to the tension between private interest and the common good. Influenced by Naumann's activities, Jäckh and his closest associates would turn to political education and a cultivation of "civility" as the means to strengthen Weimar's civil society.

The Young Conservatives and Politics as Religion

The Jäckh circle was aware of the appeal of other, alternative solutions to Germany's problems. In fact, as these intellectuals recognized, the Great War had been "the triumph of the theory of violence" and created a new "type of man gifted for action and nothing else."⁹² The war created an appeal to "national emotion" and a hatred of "reason and common sense," and thus produced a mentality that yearned for "a hero, a leader who is not responsible to anybody, who does not reason, who merely acts."⁹³ Inevitably, therefore, the intellectuals of the Jäckh circle would be involved in an acrimonious debate with the young-conservative intellectuals around Moeller-Bruck, Gleichen, and Boehm.

A group of intellectuals began to informally meet at Gleichen's private house in the spring of 1919. These meetings became the seedbed of the circle of young conservatives. They later adopted the official name of "June Club," as a form of protest against the German delegation's acceptance of the Versailles Treaty in that month.⁹⁴ The Club had emerged out the associational network centered on Gleichen and developed under the ideological leadership of Moeller-Bruck.⁹⁵ It was "an attitudinal community for the care of political education through the use of the club form,"⁹⁶ and was part of a

⁹² Bonn, "The Crisis of German Democracy," 307-308.

⁹³ Bonn, "The Crisis of German Democracy," 310.

⁹⁴ Petzold, *Wegbereiter des deutschen Faschismus*, 109.

⁹⁵ Chronist, "Politisches Kolleg," *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 4 (January 26, 1921), 1 and Boehm, "Moeller van den Bruck im Kreise seiner politischen Freunde," 693-697.

⁹⁶ Reichskommissar für Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, Nr. 13750/22 I., July 30, 1922, BArch, R 1507/417.

broader, informally organized, network of small right-wing groupings and associations that was commonly referred to as the “Circle” (*Ring*).

With the end of the war, the young conservatives had to come to terms with a military defeat that they had not foreseen. They combined the need to explain the downfall with a criticism of the political as well as social developments that had characterized Imperial Germany – developments that they believed the war experience had only momentarily interrupted. The German nation had responded as a united *Volk* to the challenges of the war but defeat and revolution had fragmented this unity. This moment of either annihilation or survival also offered the opportunity to purify the German national body of the remnants of Western influence and build a truly Germanic state. To this end, it was necessary to collect all the national forces for the rebuilding of Germany’s national power.

Young conservatives dreaded that the exceptional conditions that the war emergency had created would pave the path to a normalization, and hence to a return to pre-war socio-political relationships. In their eyes, Germans were returning to old bourgeois conventions and renouncing the activism that had characterized the war years.⁹⁷ Consequentially, young conservatives renewed their attacks against late-nineteenth-century “materialization” and “mechanization.”⁹⁸ The nation – they denounced – had lost the capacity to act because of its relying on the monarchy during the Wilhelmine Empire. “The enemy doesn’t stand on the right. The enemy doesn’t stand on the left.” – Moeller-Bruck decried – “He is in us. Our docile nature, our dispassionate

⁹⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Wir rufen!” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 9 (March 1, 1920), 1.

⁹⁸ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Der Revolutionäre Staatsmann,” *Gewissen*, vol. 5, no. 48 (December 3, 1923), 2.

nature, our undemonic nature.”⁹⁹ Young conservatives thus saw the danger of the times in an end of the emergency situation and emphasized the necessity to force Germans to action because of their inability to recognize the tragedy of the times.¹⁰⁰

The rejection of the monarchic system and the emphasis on activism led to an acceptance of revolutionary transformations. The revolution appeared to renew the emergency situation and thus became the only hope for a national renewal.¹⁰¹ In fact, it had broken the hold of the past on the present and thus – if channeled in a nationalist direction – offered the possibility to shape Germany’s future. It was therefore the task of the young conservatives, the “Circle of the Builders,” to give the revolution a real, nationalist meaning.¹⁰² The revolution provided the opportunity to nationalize socialism and, at the same time, to overcome nineteenth-century “formal democracy.”¹⁰³ In this way, the nationalization of the revolution promised to unify German society, which political parties and classes had dismembered.¹⁰⁴

Young conservatives thus developed influential analyses that sought a truly Germanic form of societal organization. They rejected Marxist socialism and were careful in setting their position apart from “reactionary” conservatism. Socialism had to be freed from the “curse” of Marxism, which had reduced history to economic

⁹⁹ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Die Nationalisierung der Demokratie,” *Gewissen*, vol. 4, no. 27 (July 3, 1922), 3.

¹⁰⁰ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Freiheit” (January 2, 1922), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 126-131.

¹⁰¹ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Der Revolutionsgewinn,” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 31 (November 11, 1919), 1-3.

¹⁰² Max H. Boehm, “Was wir wollen!” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 36 (December 17, 1919), 2.

¹⁰³ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Die Sozialisierung der Außenpolitik” (March 3, 1919), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 112-113 and Eduard Stadtler, “Die Idee der Weltrevolution,” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 4 (March 3, 1919), 1.

¹⁰⁴ Eduard Stadtler, “Die Nationalisierung der deutschen Revolution,” in *Die Neue Front*, edited by Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922), 419-420.

relationships,¹⁰⁵ hence degrading workers to proletarians.¹⁰⁶ Consequentially, they faulted Marxism for having awakened the “drives of the masses” rather than “positive national forces.”¹⁰⁷ While Marxism robbed proletarians of their sense of belonging to the nation, reactionism stood between the nation and the proletariat, and did not recognize that the war of liberation had been a war of the whole nation, aiming at the establishment of an “Empire of us all.”¹⁰⁸ In so doing, young conservatives rooted Germany’s strength in the integration of all social strata in the nation and sought to win the working classes back to the nation through a “national socialism,” an ideology distinct from both Marxism and later Nazism.

At the same time, young conservative aimed to purge the German nation of Western liberalism’s influences. Liberalism had weakened the German state by making parliaments rather than estates the foundational blocks of the state.¹⁰⁹ As a result, the German state had been based “on a mechanical counting of votes, instead of an organic union of its members” and on mediocrity in its attempt to find a mean between monarchy and democracy.¹¹⁰ The state, however, could not be based on a plurality of individuals but only on the wholeness of the *Volk*.¹¹¹ This rejection of parliamentarism therefore did not mean discarding democracy.¹¹² Rather, young conservatives sought a form of

¹⁰⁵ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, authorized English Edition (condensed) by E. O. Lorimer (New York: Howard Fertig, 1971), 42-45 and 49-58.

¹⁰⁶ Max H. Boehm, “Körperschaftliche Bindung,” in *Die Neue Front*, edited by Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922), 43.

¹⁰⁷ Boehm, “Körperschaftliche Bindung,” 37.

¹⁰⁸ Moeller-Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 155 and 199.

¹⁰⁹ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “An Liberalismus gehen Völker zugrunde,” in *Die Neue Front*, edited by Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922), 5-34.

¹¹⁰ Moeller-Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 127.

¹¹¹ Boehm, “Was wir wollen!” 1.

¹¹² Moeller-Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 128-135.

political participation that was more democratic than the formalistic parliamentary system.

Inevitably, political parties became the symbol of Western influence and liberal parliamentarism.¹¹³ Young conservatives rejected party politics and viewed nationalist nonpartisanship as the road to “break away politics from all party politics.”¹¹⁴ The party system exemplified nineteenth-century “formal democracy,” that is, “The basic idea that people’s sovereignty lies in the atomized, individualized electorate, [and] that the ‘will of the people’ thereby comes to expression.”¹¹⁵ Political parties were un-German forces destroying the unity of the *Volk* because they stood between the nation and its destiny.¹¹⁶ Overcoming party politics could be possible only through a *Volk* “that forces the parties to submit to its will.”¹¹⁷ In post-war Germany, “Left and Right” – Moeller-Bruck asserted – “became words that have lost their meaning since all what matters is the whole.”¹¹⁸ The political party was a point of view able to see only itself and hence fragmenting the German nation’s nourished unity. Old politics had focused on programs and political parties were primarily concerned with getting the maximum political profit out of a given situation rather than to – as Gleichen urged politicians to do – react to the needs of the times.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ See for example Heinrich von Gleichen, “Die Partei,” *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 9 (March 2, 1921), 3.

¹¹⁴ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Nationalistisch” (June 25, 1923), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 111.

¹¹⁵ Eduard Stadtler, *Die Revolution und das alte Parteiwesen* (Berlin: Verlag der Kulturliga, 1919), 8.

¹¹⁶ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Die Ideen der Jungen in der Politik,” *Der Tag*, vol. 19, no. 159 (July 26, 1919), 1-3.

¹¹⁷ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Parteidämmerung” (October 2, 1922), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 142.

¹¹⁸ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Der Außenseiter,” *Der Tag*, vol. 19, no. 6 (January 15, 1919), 1.

¹¹⁹ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Programm-Politik,” *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 30 (July 25, 1921), 1.

At the beginning of 1920, anti-republican sentiments were widespread and rumors of right-wing efforts to violently overthrow the government sounded convincing.¹²⁰ Insurgent military units under the command of General Walther von Lüttwitz entered Berlin on March 13 and occupied all major government offices in reaction to the government's decision to dissolve those paramilitary units that the government had tolerated until then and used in the repression of communist uprisings. Lüttwitz was in contact with Kapp, who during the war had founded the German Fatherland Party and until October 1918 had been a member of the "German Society 1914." The government fled first to Dresden and then to Stuttgart because the army could not guarantee its security. Although initially it appeared to succeed, the putsch failed because of a general strike called by the socialist members of the government and the willingness of the working class to defend the republic. While by March 20 the putsch had collapsed, revolutionary uprisings by the industrial working class continued in the Ruhr.¹²¹ In the wake of the Kapp Putsch and the Ruhr conflict, the elections of June 6, 1920 were transformed into a referendum on the achievements of the Weimar coalition. The elections resulted in a clear victory of the right parties – which the extra-parliamentary activities of the network of associations and clubs overlapping the young-conservative circles had also contributed revitalizing. From a general perspective, the election testified to the radicalization of the political spectrum with the hardening of the positions and the success of the parties to the left and to the right of the Weimar coalition. The liberal electorate clearly shifted from the DDP to the more conservative DVP. Similarly, the

¹²⁰ While in December 1919, Troeltsch had still defined the idea of a putsch from the right as a legend, a month later he considered it a serious possibility. Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 93 and 101-102.

¹²¹ On the Kapp Putsch see Larry Eugene Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 61-66 and Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 81-86.

Majority Socialists and the Catholic Center Party lost respectively half and one third of their vote in the 1919 elections. The Independent Socialists, the DNVP, and the DVP were the clear winner of the elections.¹²²

Against the background of general disorder and of the first parliamentary elections in 1920, young conservatives related the chaos to the parliamentary system and the lack of political leadership rather than to the Kapp Putsch.¹²³ The chaos and disorder that followed the Kapp putsch confirmed the bankruptcy of the party system and thus of parliamentarism. Gleichen and Stadtler condemned the existing “program-driven” political parties and stressed the young conservatives’ “Attitude-Program,” which would replace the multitude of parties with a “Unitarian front” that could be established only by men above the parties and would be the political movement of the future.¹²⁴

The leading members of the circle – Moeller-Bruck, Boehm, Gleichen, Stadtler, and Martin Spahn – primarily agreed on the analysis of the negative tendencies disrupting Germany’s national unity. They rejected the foreign ideologies of Western liberalism and Eastern Marxist socialism because they fragmented the national body either by focusing on individuals’ freedom as pluralist expression of society or on class struggle as the necessary road to a proletarian dictatorship. The mythic war experience of the “civic peace” and of the “trench community” became the point of reference for an idealized “people’s community,” which they juxtaposed to both the new parliamentary republic

¹²² On the June 1920 elections see Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933*, 67-80 and Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 86-87.

¹²³ Eduard Stadtler, “Chaos und Ziel,” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 12 (March 31, 1920), 2 and Heinrich von Gleichen, “Die Komödie der Unzulänglichkeit,” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 12 (March 31, 1920), 1. Cf. the more positive stand towards the putsch by Martin Spahn, “Tatsachen” (1920), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 294-300.

¹²⁴ Gleichen, “Die Partei,” 3 and Eduard Stadtler, “Die Rettung der Mitte,” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 21 (June 2, 1920), 1-2.

and Marxist socialism. Consequentially, the task of the young conservatives became the conceptualization not of formalistic – that is, liberal parliamentary – but of truly democratic forms of political participation. They struggled, however, to develop a positive message for the future of the German nation beyond the idealization of community and *Volk*.

As the ideologues of the group, Moeller-Bruck and Boehm attempted to merge nationalism and socialism. By the end of the war, Moeller-Bruck had become the silent center of the “June Club.” In writings that often had the tone of an oracle’s pronouncements, he envisioned a new synthesis of nationalism and socialism in the form of a third party that, by cutting across all party lines, would appeal “to the man in every German, and to the German in man.”¹²⁵ This party would eventually establish the “Third Reich” in which all society’s social tensions would be solved in the mythological solidarity of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (people’s community).¹²⁶ Symbolically, Moeller-Bruck committed suicide in May 1925 when the progressive stabilization of the Weimar Republic momentarily put an end to the hopes for an imminent overthrow of the Republic.

Against Germany’s socio-political fragmentation, the young-conservative ideologues argued that for Germany, salvation could only come on the path to unity.¹²⁷ Most consistently, Boehm attempted to define the idea of the *Volk*,¹²⁸ which he contrasted to both the “dull, docile mass” and the “organized, mechanical mosaic of

¹²⁵ Moeller-Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 141.

¹²⁶ Moeller-Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 242-243.

¹²⁷ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, “Einheit” (January 16, 1922), in *Das Recht der jungen Völker. Sammlung politischer Aufsätze*, edited by Hans Schwarz (Berlin: Verlag der Nahe Osten, 1932), 144-145.

¹²⁸ See for instance Boehm, *Europa Irredenta* and Max H. Boehm, *Das eigenständige Volk: Volkstheoretische Grundlagen der Ethnopolitik und Geisteswissenschaften* (Göttingen: Bandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1932).

individualities.”¹²⁹ Marxism had to be transformed into corporatism because the estate would cancel the class. The individual could recognize the sense of “community” in the Marxist ideal of the “class,” and his longing for it would drive him to “society.” Nonetheless, the focus on “society” could only lead to the state and never to the *Volk*. The *Volk* emerged from a continuum between past and present and in it “the ancestors live on.” With corporatism “the path is shown, out of the portfolio of social traditions to overcome the hardening of the social stratifications and of the atrophying of the classes through the new total estates.”¹³⁰

By contrast, Martin Spahn symbolized the tension, on the one hand, between nonpartisanship and party allegiance and, on the other hand, between propaganda and scientific research. Spahn was part of a group of Catholic conservatives within the “June Club.”¹³¹ He was the son of a prominent Catholic politician and had grown up under the influence of the *Kulturkampf*. At the turn of the century, however, Spahn entered in conflict with the Catholic Center Party’s line under Mathias Erzberger.¹³² He joined the DNVP after the war because he saw the only way out of political parties’ particularism in the creation of a broad political right.¹³³ The analysis of the historical penetration of Western civilization in central Europe was at the center of his academic interests.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Boehm, “Was wir wollen!” 2.

¹³⁰ Boehm, “Körperschaftliche Bindung,” 40 and 44.

¹³¹ Kemper, *Das “Gewissen” 1919-1925*, 160-161.

¹³² In an article anonymously published in the summer of 1906, he argued that a confession-based *Zentrum* party was depriving the conservative parties of many votes, hence favoring the left parties. Martin Spahn, “Selbstbiographie,” in *Deutscher Aufstieg*, edited by Hans von Arnim and Georg von Below (Berlin: Franz Schneider Verlag, 1925), 479-488.

¹³³ Martin Spahn, “Der Weg zur deutschen Rechten: Rede des Professors Dr. Martin Spahn auf dem dritten Parteitage der Deutschnationalen Volkspartei in München am 2. Sept. 1921,” *Deutschnationale Flugschrift*, no. 115 (1921). See also Martin Spahn to Paul von Hindenburg, April 30, 1925. Enclosed in Sekretariat von Hindenburg to Chef der Reichskanzlei, May 4, 1925, BArch, R 43-I/2657.

¹³⁴ At the center of numerous academic controversies because of his Catholicism, for a while Spahn was hesitant in accepting Stadler’s invitation to move to Berlin and take a more active role in the activities of the young-conservative circles. For biographical information on Spahn see Gabriele Clemens, *Martin*

Spahn characterized eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany as torn between the re-emergence of the strength of the German nation with the wars of liberation and the spreading of bureaucracy, democracy, and parliamentarism within single German states.¹³⁵ In a familiar *topos*, Spahn sought a third way between Western liberalism, which emphasized individual freedom over the connectedness to the whole, and Slavic communism stressing only the collectiveness over the individual sphere.¹³⁶

Conversely, Gleichen expressed an elitist nonpartisanship concerned with political leadership that contrasted with Spahn's party politics and Stadtler's appeal to the masses. Combining idealization of the community and fears of the unorganized mass, Gleichen coupled a celebration of a solidaristic community with a call for responsible leaders.¹³⁷ In fact, "If not all future should be renounced and the German disintegration should be prevented at the last hour, then the doctor, the expert, the learned coxswain must to the oar and the dilettante, the agitator and editor, the profiteer has to go from the captain's bridge."¹³⁸ His appeal to "experts" from the economic sector symbolized the attempt to combine communitarian notions with leaders that by being placed above party struggles could guarantee the independence of political leadership from political interests.¹³⁹

Spahn und der rechts Katholizismus in der Weimarer Republik (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1983). See pages 150-153 for Spahn's hesitations in front of Stadtler's invitation.

¹³⁵ Martin Spahn, "Im Ringen um den deutschen Staat der Gegenwart" (1925), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 34-35.

¹³⁶ Martin Spahn, "Der deutsche Traum vom Weltbürgertum und seine geschichtliche Wurzeln," *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, vol. 15, no. 7 (1918), 8-9.

¹³⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen, "Führer und Gemeinschaftsgedanke," *Das neue Deutschland*, vol. 7 (1919), 131.

¹³⁸ Heinrich von Gleichen, "Diktatur der Sachverständigen," *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 5 (February 4, 1920), 6.

¹³⁹ See also Hutten, "Regierung!" *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 33 (August 25, 1920), 1 and Eduard Stadtler, "Der Ruf nach den Wirtschaftlern," *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 23 (June 6, 1921), 1-2.

The emphasis of young conservatives on experts' objective leadership, and in particular on economic elites, radicalized their conflict with Jäckh's circle, which – at the same time – was reaffirming politics' supremacy over economics.¹⁴⁰ The conflict became more acrimonious and personalized after the Spa Conference of July 1920. The Conference was the German government's first official meeting with the Entente and addressed the pressing question of the Reparations that the Versailles Treaty had condemned Germany to pay. The industrialist Hugo Stinnes, who was part of the German delegation and one of the most prominent financial backers of the young conservatives, disrupted the Conference with vitriolic statements.¹⁴¹

Bonn, who had been appointed advisor to the Chancellor on the reparation question and in this function participated in the Spa Conference, expressed the criticism of liberal intellectuals by condemning Stinnes's inflammatory comments. He stated that Stinnes's role in the negotiations at Spa epitomized the problems that the penetration of economic thinking in political affairs caused.¹⁴² In fact, the pressures of big business and the tendency to believe that "politics was nothing but economics" had caused – Bonn continued – this progressive intermingling of politics and economics.¹⁴³ In reaction, Gleichen attacked Bonn, who was – according to Gleichen – "ignorant of the actual forces of the German nation and knows only the dogma of the fulfillment of the Versailles Peace Treaty." By making Bonn a symbol of the scorned parliamentary government, he concluded, "Do you know, you who call yourself government, that

¹⁴⁰ See Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie*, 121 and Ernst Jäckh, "Das Dritte Jahr. (Staat und Wirtschaft – Wissen und Wille.)" *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1923-1924), 6.

¹⁴¹ On the Spa Conference see Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 109-112 and Wolfgang Elz, "Foreign Policy," in *Weimar Germany*, 54-61.

¹⁴² Moritz J. Bonn, "The Crisis of the German State," *The Living Age* (August 5, 1922), 349. On Bonn's role also see Bonn, *Wandering Scholar*, 251-272.

¹⁴³ Bonn, "The Crisis of the German State," 348.

Germany is to be a theater of war, on which the thunderstorm shall unload again? Don't you know, that there is war?"¹⁴⁴

Gleichen's attack not only symbolized the tensions between two groups of intellectuals that – in the summer and fall of 1920 – were establishing competing educational institutes, it also expressed of the peculiar “personal politics” of the young conservatives. Gleichen had expounded on this political attitude a year earlier. He had argued that he aimed for a “personal dispute” rather than for a discussion in the “technical domain” because all current events were “more questions of character rather than questions of programs.”¹⁴⁵ Consequentially, he stated, “Therefore I consider it a necessity that, in the first place, we conduct a personal critique in the public discussion and, in it, proceed with all the personal acrimoniousness.”¹⁴⁶ Referring to the dispute he was involved in at the time, Gleichen emblematically concluded, “this letter to you is not a personal dispute in the common understanding of the word, not an improper jostling, which you can rebuff as un-objective. The personal is the factual in my view.”¹⁴⁷

Like the liberals of the Jäckh circle, young conservatives analyzed the roots of Germany's problems and proposed new forms of societal organizations. Germany's defeat was rooted in society's socio-political fragmentation and in the inability of the political system to bridge the tension between private interest and the common good. True democracy, however, was grounded in the idealistic notion of a *Volk*, which a responsible leadership had to guide and represent. This conception of democracy,

¹⁴⁴ Hutten, “Regierung!” 1.

¹⁴⁵ Heinrich von Gleichen, Open Letter to Professor Wilbrandt, January 9, 1919, p. 1. Enclosed in Heinrich von Gleichen to Friedrich Meinecke, January 10, 1919, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Meinecke, F., Nr. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen, Open Letter to Professor Wilbrandt, January 9, 1919, p. 2. Enclosed in Heinrich von Gleichen to Friedrich Meinecke, January 10, 1919, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Meinecke, F., Nr. 13.

¹⁴⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen, Open Letter to Professor Wilbrandt, January 9, 1919, p. 4. Enclosed in Heinrich von Gleichen to Friedrich Meinecke, January 10, 1919, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Meinecke, F., Nr. 13.

however, deliberately bypassed those liberal institutions aiming to form a common will through mediation and negotiation. By contrast, maintaining a sense of emergency became the key to force the German nation to activism. This emphasis on action paralleled the peculiar “personal politics” of the young conservatives. Activism and a personal, total commitment had to drive the responsible leader’s political action, which deemed objective political discourse and readiness to compromise as a sign of weakness.

Conclusion

After the initial shock, German public intellectuals viewed the collapse of the monarchic state as an opportunity. The military defeat and the communist revolution of the winter of 1918-19 fostered these elites’ public engagement and heightened their readiness to take personal responsibility amid the revolutionary turmoil. This political participation was the logical continuation of their politicization in the plethora of organizations that had emerged during the war. The shared concern with Bolshevism, however, did not survive the radicalization of socio-political differences. As the cases of the *Volksbund* and the “German League” showed, the revolution and the national outrage in reaction of the Versailles Treaty only generated an ephemeral unity. Both the liberals of the Jäckh circle and the young conservatives viewed the doctrinism of party politics as the cause of German society’s new fragmentation. Consequentially, they developed contrasting understandings of political participation and democracy to counter these worrisome trends.

Naumann, Weber, and Meinecke developed theoretical and historical frameworks that provided a point of reference for those liberal public intellectuals that went beyond the break represented by the war, defeat, and collapse of the Empire. Before and during

the war, they had dreaded the influence of the Marxist “class struggle” ideology.

Consequentially, they had aimed to integrate the working class into the national body in order to break the exclusive ties of socio-cultural milieus. In the aftermath of the war, and in particular after the Kapp Putsch and the murder of Walther Rathenau (June 24, 1922), these intellectuals became aware of the dangers from the right.¹⁴⁸

Liberal democrats were involved in not only a metaphorical but also real debate with the young conservatives. In fact, the “action” and “deed” that liberals minimized were at the center of young conservatives’ discourse.¹⁴⁹ In their writing and speeches, the liberals around Jäckh adopted the language of elders who wanted to convince their audience of the need to support the Republic through rational arguments. As his post-war writings show, Heuss addressed the major issues of the day with an objective and dispassionate style, and aimed to convince the reader by presenting as objectively as possible the “facts” at hand. Conversely, Meinecke’s is often considered the paradigmatic example of the Republican of Reason. Meinecke’s “monarchic vocabulary,” however, not only signaled initial hesitations toward the new constitutional system, it also had a propagandistic value since he addressed those bourgeois circles that most struggled with coming to terms with the collapse of the monarchy.

By contrast, the young conservatives adopted a powerful language that emphasized action, youth, and change. They identified themselves with the force that would awaken and save Germany in their speeches and writings. This rhetorical approach

¹⁴⁸ On the occasion of the second anniversary of the DHfP, Jäckh celebrated Rathenau, whose “fall and destiny is for us one more commitment to do everything we can to achieve a decontamination of the diseased national body through an objectivation of politics, through the will for a state ethos.” Jäckh, “Zwei Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik,” 34-35.

¹⁴⁹ Emblematic is Eduard Stadtler, “Der Weg zur Tat,” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 10 (June 17, 1919), 1. In this article, Stadtler attacked critics who only protest without trying to “do it better” and called for action against the government and the old party system.

was at the center of both their positive and negative messages. While they self-styled themselves as the “Circle of Builders” and their first two publications with programmatic value were clearly self-centered,¹⁵⁰ also their attacks against political adversaries became highly personalized and acrimonious. Like in the case of Bonn, Gleichen used Mathias Erzberger as a symbol of the lack of will and character of Germany’s political leadership. Erzberger, who since the beginning of the Versailles peace negotiations had argued that Germany had to sign the treaty, symbolized in Gleichen’s words “The policy of caving in, of protests, behind which stands no spirit, no will, no character.”¹⁵¹ Similarly, in the aftermath of Rathenau’s assassination and the popular outcry against right-wing circles, the *Gewissen* published an open letter by a German American who attacked Chancellor Joseph Wirth for stating that the enemy of the republic sat on the right and argued that even German Americans in the United States during the war had not been treated like Wirth was treating the “best part” of German population.¹⁵²

Both groups, however, inserted their arguments and attacks in a broader narrative that testified to the conviction of the intrinsic rightness of their respective positions. Characteristically, liberals worried over the lack of a foundational myth for the republic (and in this sense urged to a rediscovery of 1848) but remained convinced that no viable

¹⁵⁰ On the circle of builders see Boehm, “Was wir wollen!” 1-2. The first two publications with programmatic value are title “What we want!” and *The New Front*. Boehm, “Was wir wollen!” 1-2 and Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm, eds., *Die Neue Front* (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922).

¹⁵¹ Hutten, “Die Versklavung Deutschlands,” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 36 (December 17, 1919), 1. For a similar case see Max H. Boehm’s attack against Philipp Scheidemann. Max H. Boehm, “Scheidemanns Revolutionsbilanz,” *Das Gewissen*, vol. 1, no. 32 (November 18, 1919), 1. When Erzberger was murdered in the summer of 1921 because his attitude at the Versailles negotiation was regarded as a betrayal by nationalist circles, Spahn downplayed the popular protests and decried the weak attitude of the parties of the right, which, in the aftermath of the assassination, seemed to move to the center. Martin Spahn, “Zur innenpolitischen Lage” (1921), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 308-317.

¹⁵² Fred W. Elven, “Das Urteil eines amerikanisachen Republikaners,” *Gewissen*, vol. 4, no. 29 (July 17, 1922), 1.

alternatives existed to the parliamentary system.¹⁵³ In a typical optimistic approach, Bonn suggested that dictators would be forced to reestablish some form of parliamentary system because they were never able to solve the problem of succession, since modest men can guide democracies but not dictatorships.¹⁵⁴

Like liberals, also young conservatives used history to detail the emergency of the present age. Nonetheless, these historical parallels while stressing the tragedy of Germany's condition placed the German nation in a broader narrative characterized by national ascension and redemption. Spahn's case is emblematic.¹⁵⁵ He repeatedly compared Germany's critical situation to past events such as the aftermath of the Thirty Year's War or the Napoleonic invasion.¹⁵⁶ He used these historical comparisons to stress the challenges and obstacles of the time and to push Germans to action. In his writings, however, Spahn used German history to illustrate how the German nation had successfully summoned all forces and regained national and international power. In this way, Spahn skillfully constructed a historical parallel that aimed to push the German nation to action by presenting it with a tragic national narrative of doom and redemption. Emblematically, in a speech held on occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the German Reich he stated

at this day of commemoration, the worry about what may become of Germany is so big in us that we look backwards just to be able, by observation of the past, to look further and deeper into the future ... Volk and state hardly can endure a collapse like ours if they conceive their

¹⁵³ On the lack of a founding "legend" and reference to 1848 see Heuss, *Zwischen Gestern und Morgen*, Heuss, *Deutschlands Zukunft*, and Heuss, "Schwarz-Rot-Gold," 1475-1479.

¹⁵⁴ Bonn, *The Crisis of European Democracy*, 90-93.

¹⁵⁵ A similar case can be made for Otto Hoetzsch. See in particular Otto Hoetzsch, "Deutschland als Grenzland, Deutschland als Reich," *Deutsch-Akademische Schriften*, issue 7 (1925), 3-16.

¹⁵⁶ See for instance Spahn, "Mitteleuropa," 2-38 and Martin Spahn, *Denkrede am 50. Gedenktage der Reichsgründung* (Köln: Oskar Müller Verlag, 1921).

existence only as an existence from yesterday and think to have a history of barely 50 years.¹⁵⁷

Both circles of intellectuals reacted to the defeat and revolution by conceptualizing new forms of societal organization. Against a background of crisis, these intellectuals constructed narratives that, although employing contrasting rhetorical devices, aimed to rebuild a strong nation and state by recurring either to the strength of rational argumentation or the power of the deed. By conceptualizing forms of societal organization based on the new centrality of the *Volk*, both groups recognized the centrality of political education in the aftermath of the war. Education and educational institutes thus soon became the center of these intellectual circles and – at the same time – their most ambitious plans to transform into reality their conceptualizations. The violent polemics between the two groups that accompanied the founding of the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* and *Politische Kolleg* over a period of few weeks in the fall of 1920 would testify to the importance of these institutes in the plans of both liberals and young conservatives.

¹⁵⁷ Spahn, *Denkrede am 50. Gedenktage der Reichsgründung*, 1.

CHAPTER 4: EDUCATING GERMANS: BETWEEN CIVIL POLITICS AND *VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT*

World War One and the revolutionary unrest of the winter of 1918-19 had swept away Imperial Germany and questioned social conventions. Germany's cultural elites beheld these socio-political transformations with shock and alarm. Nonetheless, at the same time, they also viewed defeat and revolution as a new beginning. Consequentially, they investigated the causes of the collapse and proposed new forms of societal organization. Politicized by the war, Germany's public intellectuals became involved in the post-war political debates and, in a radicalized public sphere, aimed to influence political developments. These intellectuals faced different challenges in their efforts to transform into reality their ideological constructs, as these were grounded in contrasting conceptualizations of democracy. Paradoxically, however, these contrasting conceptions of democracy were rooted in the common recognition that Germany's societal fragmentation was one of the major causes of the crisis.

The massification and democratization of politics modified the role of intellectuals in society. The total war had further enlarged political society. While the revolution had confirmed long-rooted fears of the masses, politicians and intellectuals recognized the need to legitimize political systems in front of the people. In this new context, public intellectuals were at the center of the political arena in their mediating role between political systems and politicized masses. Public intellectuals became synthesizers and in-between figures in a highly politicized society in which every vote counted. In fact, they simplified political ideologies and made them accessible to the masses, and in so doing aimed to influence public opinion.

In the aftermath of World War One, the intellectuals at the center of this study viewed political education as the solution to Germany's problems. War and revolution had radically altered German society's socio-political equilibrium. Extreme politicization and radicalization of public discourse accompanied the penetration of the masses in the public sphere. The rancorous debate between the leadership of the "Political College" (*Politische Kolleg*, or PK) and that of the "German School of Politics" (*Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, or DHfP) epitomized broader debates on the tension between private interest and the common good in a modern society. Both founded in the fall of 1920, these two educational institutes became central to these intellectuals' efforts that aimed to transform their socio-political visions into reality. These educational programs and their goals replicated the contrasting understandings of democracy that their leaderships had advanced.

For young conservatives, political education had to develop a national consciousness that was able to transcend political factionalism and thus integrate the individual into the broader national community. To this end, the PK organized special courses in several German cities in cooperation with like-minded organizations. In addition, in open competition with the DHfP, it founded a regular educational institute in 1922, the "College of National Politics" (*Hochschule für nationale Politik*). The PK was the most ambitious endeavor of the young-conservative milieu and prided itself with "being above the parties" and "nonpartisanship" (*Überparteilichkeit*). Paradoxically, internal dissent over the relationship between the masses and the leadership and the influence of political parties disrupted the group's unity.

By contrast, the leadership of the DHfP viewed political education as a tool to counter the radicalization of political discourse in Germany's public sphere. For the faculty of the DHfP, objective political knowledge was the precondition for a civil political discourse that averted the dangers of political doctrines and ideologies. To this end, in the first half of the 1920s, the DHfP developed as an institute that primarily focused on the political education of men and women active in the political world. As Germany's first school of public affairs, it emphasized practical learning and working groups, and prided well-known democratic leaders among its faculty. In this context, the leadership of the DHfP conceptualized *Überparteilichkeit* as a political principle rooted in the respect of the political adversary and the willingness to compromise.

Accordingly, in the first section, I analyze the renewed attention to political education in the aftermath of World War One. Political education provided the means to counter Germany's socio-political fragmentation and thus aimed to reestablish German international status and role in world affairs. The acrimonious debate centered on contrasting understandings of the concept of *Überparteilichkeit* provided the background for the development of the educational programs of the intellectuals at the center of this study. Secondly, I detail the educational philosophy of the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*. The leadership of the DHfP solved the tension between endorsement of the Weimar Republic and criticism of German society's polarization by conceptualizing *Überparteilichkeit* as civility in political discourse. Finally, I analyze the founding of the *Politische Kolleg*, which aimed to strengthen the German *Volk*'s collective consciousness. In the eyes of the young conservatives, the juxtaposition between the PK

and the DHfP mirrored – on a practical level – the either-or scenario that they had established between “pure” democracy and “formal” democracy.

The Weimar Republic and Political Education

Political education had become a central issue in the reformist milieu, as Friedrich Naumann’s activities in the decades preceding World War One had shown.¹ With the transformation of the political system the old structure of the “party of notables” appeared unprepared to face the challenges of an enlarged political society in which – through the socialist mass party – the working classes had become conscious of their role. In addition, Germany’s rising international status, and the resulting political tensions, had emphasized in the eyes of many commentators the amateurism of Germany’s political leadership in foreign affairs.

War and revolution had validated the pre-war invocations for a broader political education. Against the background of the communist uprising in the winter of 1918-19, the general calls for political education expressed a common concern with the Social Democratic Party’s ability to influence the youth and to form cadres of young party members. Conversely, during the war, the Social Democratic press had vehemently reacted to laws that, for the fear of a dangerous politicization, forbade the youth from attending political meetings.² Consequentially, against the background of the swift collapse of the “civic peace” and the swelling civil unrest, the executive committee of the “Intelligence Service for the Homeland” had discussed the importance of political

¹ Particularly tense also was the debate on the reform of the elementary school system. See Marjorie Lamberti, *The Politics of Education. Teachers and School Reform in Weimar Germany* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), chapter 1.

² See the newspaper clippings in GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 77 CB S, Nr. 89, Bd. VI-VII.

education and, through Jäckh, had decided to contact Naumann, who had recently founded the “Citizens School.”³

Although further contacts between the “Intelligence Service” and Naumann’s educational institute are not documented, the “Citizens School” was clearly rooted in this general apprehension for the influence of socialists on the youth. Naumann had recognized that the “politics of notables” were hardly adequate to the necessities of mass societies. In the past, the masses had elected men rather than programs, whereas now political parties were being transformed from “personal followings, circles of friends and regulars’ tables” into “communities of principles and representations of programs.”⁴ The penetration of the masses in politics hence required a well-developed party organization. In contrast to the SPD and Catholic Center Party, however, liberals did not have an organizational infrastructure aiming to foster political consciousness.⁵ These concerns with the educational infrastructure of socialists were shared across the political spectrum, and paralleled the political and military offensive against Marxist socialism in the aftermath of the war. For instance, after Stadtler’s ousting, the “Anti-Bolshevist League” – under the guise of the “League for the Protection of German Culture” (*Liga zum Schutze der deutschen Kultur*) – organized political courses in the attempt “to mitigate the harshness, or rather eliminate, class struggle.”⁶

Political education – and more in general educational policies – became therefore the means by which Germany’s cultural elites aimed to cultivate the unity of the German

³ Aufklärungsdienst in der Heimat, *Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit der Zentralstelle für Heimatsaufklärung*, May 23, 1918, p. 4, BArch, R 703/111.

⁴ Naumann, “Vier Reden an Junge Freunde,” 18.

⁵ Wilhelm Heile, “Nutzen und Notwendigkeit einer politischen Volkshochschule,” in Friedrich Naumann and Wilhelm Heile, *Erziehung zur Politik* (Berlin: Buchverlag der “Hilfe,” 1918), 31-32.

⁶ Liga zum Schutze der deutschen Kultur to Arbeitsamt Berlin Steglitz, August 20, 1919, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 042-05-03, Nr. 412. See also *Die Tätigkeit der Liga zum Schutze der deutschen Kultur e.V.*, Summer 1919, Landesarchiv Berlin, A Rep. 042-05-03, Nr. 412.

nation, which was threatened by class politics as well as territorial losses. Carl H. Becker became a key figure in the development of educational policies in Germany during the 1920s. In 1916, Becker had joined Prussia's Ministry of Culture to work on the preparation of courses in foreign affairs at Prussian universities and, a year later, had stressed the limits of Germans in understanding foreign affairs in a noted memorandum, "On the Improvement of Foreign Affairs."⁷ Later, Becker directed Prussia's Ministry of Education for some months in 1921 and from February 1925 to January 1930. He was close to both Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, and sought cultural, educational, and scientific means to bridge Germany's socio-political divisions. Accordingly, he envisioned an ethical-political as well as civic education as a "synthetic" science.

Becker defined "cultural and educational policy" (*Kulturpolitik*) as "a conscious creation of spiritual values in the service of the nation or of the state for internal consolidation and externally for contentions with other nations" in a 1919 memorandum submitted to the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly.⁸ Against the backdrop of Germany's political and economic collapse, he argued that, "Unconcerned by the praise and criticism of other countries, out of ourselves we must create in the cultural areas the new spiritual Germany."⁹ Crucially, therefore, *Kulturpolitik* had the task to create a common ground on which all political parties as well as the majority of the German people could find their way back to national unity.¹⁰ To this end, Becker envisioned a new cultural and educational policy that aimed to create a cultural

⁷ Carl H. Becker, "Über die Förderung der Auslandstudien" (1917), in *Internationale Wissenschaft und nationale Bildung: ausgewählte Schriften* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1997), 157-170.

⁸ Carl H. Becker, "Kulturpolitische Aufgaben des Reiches" (1919), in *Internationale Wissenschaft und nationale Bildung: ausgewählte Schriften* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1997), 225.

⁹ Carl H. Becker, "Kulturpolitische Aufgaben des Reiches," 236.

¹⁰ Carl H. Becker, "Kulturpolitische Aufgaben des Reiches," 255.

consciousness that could be shared across political factions in a period in which party politics seemed to fragment national unity.¹¹

From this perspective, political education offered the means by which one could counter Germany's fragmentation and even reestablish Germany's international prestige. Across the political spectrum, intellectuals viewed the French "Free College for Political Science" (*École libre des sciences politiques*) as a model for Germany. While before the war this reference had served to denounce German leadership's lack of political expertise,¹² after the war, commentators celebrated the *École libre*, which they believed had formed those French political leaders who had guided France in the victorious war.¹³ In this way, political education became a tool for the rebuilding of the German state.

Lastly, the debate on political education also mirrored a dual political concern of these intellectuals. For liberals, the focus on political education was primarily part of a general search for new analytical frameworks that could provide a better understanding of the democratization of state and society. In fact, the Weimar Constitution contained a declaration on behalf of (religious) tolerance and a commitment to civic education with Article 148.¹⁴ The focus on civic education emerged in the eyes of the Constitution's drafters from the need to integrate the German population into the new republican state. In fact, the new German democracy did not emerge from the conviction of the entire

¹¹ Carl H. Becker, "Eine Forderung an die neue Erziehung" (1919), in *Internationale Wissenschaft und nationale Bildung: ausgewählte Schriften* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1997), 278.

¹² Plehn, "Eine Hochschule für Politik," 265-272.

¹³ See the speeches in *Politische Bildung: Wille, Wesen, Ziel, Weg. Sechs Reden gehalten bei der Eröffnung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1921), Spahn, "Die Pariser politische Hochschule," and Paul M. Rühlmann, "Das Problem: Politische Führer, eine Bildungsfrage," *Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol. 181, no. 2 (1920), 234-235. Although referring to the model of the *Ecole libre*, in other writings Rühlmann criticized the centrality of revanchist thought in France's educational system. See for example Paul M. Rühlmann, *Der Revanchegeanke and der französischen Schule* (Berlin: Gebrüder Paetel, 1920).

¹⁴ Marjorie Lamberti, *The Politics of Education. Teachers and School Reform in Weimar Germany* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 56-64.

German people and therefore had not yet been totally internalized.¹⁵ From this perspective, political education had the role to educate Germans to democracy and complete the integration of all social strata in the new state.

Conversely, for some intellectual circles, political education primarily aimed to address the perceived lack of political leadership in Germany, which the defeat in the war had tragically confirmed. This elitist concern with political leadership was also shared across the political spectrum, as the pre-war writings of Naumann and Weber demonstrated. Nonetheless, Gleichen's and Stadtler's post-war invocations of political experts testified to the centrality of elites' political education in the educational programs of young conservatives. Gleichen repeatedly decried the lack of leadership and "statecraft" in Germany.¹⁶ The power of the state, he asserted, had been destroyed after the war because political leaders did not grasp the depth of Germany's crisis.¹⁷ The challenges of the time could be overcome only once the problem of political leadership was solved,¹⁸ and hence the key task – as Boehm wrote – was "the selection of the leader and, further, the advancement and correct approach of the capable."¹⁹ Young conservatives therefore saw the proof of leadership's dilettantism in the lost war, whereas the reaction of Germans to the outbreak of the war in August 1914 had testified to the strength of the nation as a whole.

The young-conservative call for a new political leadership was part of their general criticism of Western civilization, which – in their eyes – had replaced the great

¹⁵ Rühlmann, "Das Problem: Politische Führer, eine Bildungsfrage," 233-241.

¹⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen, "Politisches Führertum," *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 49 (December 12, 1920), 3.

¹⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen, "Staatsführung in Krisis," in *Die Neue Front*, edited by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922), 380-382.

¹⁸ Stadtler, *Die Revolution und das alte Parteiwesen*, 18-20.

¹⁹ Boehm, "Was wir wollen!" 2.

Persönlichkeit (person of influence or importance) with impersonal mechanisms.²⁰

Consequently, they juxtaposed the leadership of the *Persönlichkeit* to the politics of the interests-driven parliamentary system.²¹ In so doing, they viewed the war as the end of an old style of political leadership. The tragedy of the present age, Spahn argued, was that the youth, hardened by four years in the trenches, had come home and found the places of power occupied by the old generation. The war youth could only rebuild Germany as a nation if it was allowed to act in peace as it had in war.²² The solution to Germany's leadership problem was therefore the replacement of the pre-war generation that was still in command with a young generation of political leaders.

As the debate in the aftermath of the war showed, political education promised to be a tool for the reestablishment of Germany's international status by forming a new, more effective political leadership. At the same time, however, by stressing the nonpartisan character of their endeavors, both young conservatives and the Jäckh circle explicitly addressed political factionalism and thus aimed to educate the masses to responsible political action. In post-war rhetoric and polemic, the common reference to *Überparteilichkeit* assumed slightly different meanings, which, however, pointed to radically contrasting forms of societal organization.

Hence, inevitably, an acerbic dispute between the Jäckh circle and the young conservatives exploded. Educational plans aiming to strengthen the solidity and solidarity of the *Volk* inevitably clashed with educational approaches rooted in pluralist visions of society. The verbal violence of the debate also symbolized the general radicalization of

²⁰ On a more general level, *Persönlichkeit* may also refer to "personality" and "person of character" or "towering individuality."

²¹ Max H. Boehm, "Die Grenzen des Versicherungsgedankens," 19.

²² Martin Spahn, "1648 und 1918," in *Die Neue Front*, edited by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922), 1-4.

political discourse, in particular considering that it involved public figures that until recently had cooperated in the same cross-partisan organizations, such as the “German Society 1914” and the *Kulturbund*.

Young conservatives furiously reacted when in the summer of 1920 Jäckh unveiled his education plan. In late July 1920, in an angry letter to Becker, Gleichen accused Jäckh of disloyalty because he allegedly had betrayed a previous agreement and was now planning to establish a political college similar to the one Gleichen was developing with Spahn. He argued that the two endeavors would be rivals and noted that, “It almost appears as if the DEMOCRATIC PARTY, to which particularly close links are commonly attributed to you [Becker], was in a hurry to throw this anchor before the nonpartisan movement of my friends could make further progress.”²³ Gleichen thus clearly contrasted his allegedly nonpartisan endeavor to the partisanship of Jäckh, who he assumed to be close to both Becker and the DDP. Furthermore, accusing Becker of supporting Jäckh, he noted that, “the YOUTH is excluded and the dead old hand is supported.”²⁴ In this way, Gleichen raised the second point of contention. The young conservatives juxtaposed their political action to the pre-war political system, which – in their view – Jäckh and his associates personified.

In the following weeks the conflict was radicalized and personalized. Gleichen renewed his attacks against Jäckh, who he deemed unable to awake a new political will in the youth and lacking “the spirit of political renewal.”²⁵ Furthermore, in an article

²³ Heinrich von Gleichen to Carl H. Becker, July 31, 1920, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430. Emphasis in the original.

²⁴ Heinrich von Gleichen to Carl H. Becker, July 31, 1920, p. 3, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430. Emphasis in the original.

²⁵ Heinrich von Gleichen to Carl H. Becker, August 11, 1920, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430. Emphasis in the original.

published in the *Gewissen* on August 18, 1920, Gleichen stressed that Jäckh had never developed a “clear political line” in his endeavors (citing as examples the *Werkbund* and the “German Society 1914”).

Professor Jäckh is still the amiable, diplomatic go-between for everyone and everything. He possesses an unusual ability for inspired formulations and middle lines, which to the parliamentary minister ... made him indispensable. Indeed, this led his path from season to season to the closest leaning towards the knowledge and will of the leadership.²⁶

In Gleichen’s attack, Jäckh became the symbol of liberal parliamentarism’s essence. Indeed, his willingness to compromise and negotiate sharply contrasted with the activism and the celebration of the deed that characterized young conservatives’ political rhetoric.

Soon after the publication of this article, Jäckh met with Gleichen at the “June Club,” with Heuss and Moeller-Bruck present as witnesses. With Becker, Jäckh claimed that Gleichen had withdrawn his accusations of “disloyalty” during this meeting.²⁷

Nonetheless, participants clearly restated the differences between the two groups.

Gleichen pointed out that young conservatives saw in the DHfP “the spirit of the lack of a national guiding principle,” which the DDP embodied. Conversely, Jäckh had retorted – according to Gleichen’s account – by arguing that the young conservatives’ endeavor had a clear “party-character” because it supported a specific political attitude.²⁸ Symbolically, therefore, both groups viewed the rival venture as the emblem of party politics, which they deemed responsible for Germany’s weakness.

²⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Führer-Ausbildung,” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 32 (August 18, 1920), 1.

²⁷ *Besprechung bei Staatssekretär Dr. Becker im Kultusministerium am Montag, den 30. August 1920*, September 1, 1920, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

²⁸ Heinrich von Gleichen to Carl H. Becker, September 9, 1920, p. 5, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

At first, Becker – who was close to several personalities of the young-conservative milieu – tried to mediate between Gleichen and Jäckh.²⁹ On August 30, Becker hoped to find a form of coexistence between the two institutes in a meeting with Jäckh and Gleichen. During the meeting, Jäckh again pointed out the nonpartisan character of the Board of Directors and Faculty Council of the DHfP, and Becker characterized the difference between the DHfP and the PK as extensive as well as intensive political education of the German people in the former, and intensive focus on the individuality in the latter.³⁰

Notwithstanding these attempts of mediation, young conservatives continued their attacks against the DHfP and its leadership. Announcing the opening of the *Politische Kolleg*, Gleichen attacked the “political professors” of the DHfP who “collected in their heads worldviews, and who now would like to prove also that the real developments validate these worldviews.”³¹ In commenting on the opening ceremony of the DHfP, young conservatives condemned its liberal and pacifist tones.³² In an article in the *Gewissen*, Hans Röseler argued that political education was only possible if limited to the provision of technical knowledge. This, however, was possible only – and here Röseler expressed the essence of young conservatives’ accusations – “if it succeeds in being really above the parties, and not only in-between the parties or even center party-like.”³³

²⁹ Still in August 1920, Becker expressed his support to Hans Röseler’s magazine, *Die Hochschule*, which risked to be closed because of financial problems. Carl H. Becker to Hans Röseler, August 19, 1920, GStA PK, VI. NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 3548.

³⁰ *Besprechung bei Staatssekretär Dr. Becker im Kultusministerium am Montag, den 30. August 1920*, September 1, 1920, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

³¹ Hutten, “Politische Professoren,” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 40 (October 20, 1920), 1.

³² Asmus Gendrich, “Ecole liberale?” *Gewissen*, vol. 2, no. 43 (November 3, 1920), 2-6. See also *Kieler Neuesten Nachrichten*, “Eine merkwürdige Hochschule,” no. 256 (November 12, 1920), GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

³³ Hans Röseler, “Eine Deutsche Hochschule für Politik,” *Die Hochschule*, vol. 4, no. 7 (November 3, 1920), 204.

Röseler's critique thus points to the emergence of two contrasting understandings of *Überparteilichkeit*. True *Überparteilichkeit* meant being above and beyond party politics, whereas equal distance to political parties simply equaled to a lack of political consciousness and direction.

These attacks resulted in the definitive rupture between Gleichen and Becker. Becker noted that Gleichen's statements "do not inspire confidence in your movement."³⁴ In addition, he characterized Gleichen's juxtaposition between old and young as "easy demagoguery" and pointed out that, "The problem lies not in having ideas, but rather in the implementation of ideas. Who comes from the praxis knows how difficult it is to implement in reality even the smallest of the ideas."³⁵ In his reply, Gleichen asserted that "youth" referred to the "oppositional stand against the political impotence of a previous generation." Hence, he restated his distrust in "your [Becker's] works of the Political School and your mandatory, Mr. Jäckh."³⁶

For young conservatives, therefore, *Überparteilichkeit* referred to a "stand above the parties." From this perspective, they coupled *Überparteilichkeit* to an ideal form of societal organization that integrated the individual into the national community. The *Volk*, as an organic unity, linked the individual to the nation's destiny and provided a pre-political unity able to transcend socio-political differences. By "being above the parties," a political leadership or a political position was literally placed above the political fray and thus immune to the corruptions of political processes. In so doing, it by-passed

³⁴ Carl H. Becker to Heinrich von Gleichen, October 16, 1920, p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430.

³⁵ Carl H. Becker to Heinrich von Gleichen, October 16, 1920, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430.

³⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen to Carl H. Becker, November 19, 1920, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 430.

republican intermediary institutions and opened the door to a search for alternative forms of popular political legitimization.

By contrast, although not immune to the appeal of a mythical people's community, the Jäckh circle defended a conception of society that was rooted in the plurality of contrasting interests. Not without caution, these liberal reformers viewed political institutions – in particular parties and the parliament – as structures able to educate the individual to a life in common. In this context, *Überparteilichkeit* was at times characterized as an equal distance to political parties. Most consistently, however, they conceptualized *Überparteilichkeit* as a socio-political ethos. It referred to a political attitude and mode of action that were rooted in the acceptance of differences and respect for the political adversary. In fact, as Becker suggested with his comment on the implementation of ideas, the praxis of the political process required a willingness to sacrifice the purity of the idea to the realities of a polycentric political system. For the leadership of the DHfP, *Überparteilichkeit* thus became the key element for the good working of a liberal republican state.

The *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* and the Politics of Civility

Jäckh and his associates inaugurated the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* on October 24, 1920, against the background of the diatribe with the young conservatives. Federal President Friedrich Ebert and other high-ranking government officials attended the opening ceremony. Becker was instrumental in politically supporting the new institute, thus partially validating Gleichen's accusations.³⁷ In fact, Becker would rarely refuse to give guest lectures, and his lectures on "Problems of Middle Eastern Politics"

³⁷ Theodor Heuss, *Ansprache des Bundespräsidenten bei der Gedächtnisfeier für Carl Heinrich Becker am 11. Februar 1953*, p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1701. See also Heuss, *Erinnerungen, 1905-1933*, 301.

recurred every fall semester.³⁸ Furthermore, in an internal note, Prussia's Ministry of Education declared, "to morally support this endeavor at the best of his possibilities."³⁹ It soon became a tradition that representatives of either the federal or state government would attend the DHfP's annual ceremonies as a sign of the institutional interest in the School.⁴⁰

Jäckh was successful in including personalities from a broad network of reformers, intellectuals, politicians, and industrialists and bankers in the leading organs of his new venture. Hence, he made the DHfP the center of an influential circle of public figures. The Board of Trustees primarily had financial tasks and included well-known personalities such as wealthy industrialists Carl Friedrich von Siemens and Robert Bosch, economist Hjalmar Schacht, diplomat and industrialist Richard von Kühlmann, President of the Court of Justice Walter Simons, and banker and co-founder of the DDP Theodor Vogelstein.⁴¹ The School was directed by a Board of Directors (until 1927, chaired by Wilhelm Drews – president of the Higher Administrative Court and former Prussian Minister of the Interior), which counted among its members the reformers Bäumer and Heile, the historians Delbrück and Meinecke, and the politicians Heuss and Schiffer. Significantly, it also included representatives of the Foreign Office, Ministry of the Interior, and Prussia's Ministry of Culture. First Heuss and then Arnold Wolfers (from 1925 to 1930) served as the Director of Academic Programs, who was in charge of the academic curriculum. From 1925 Hans Simons and then, after the elimination of the role

³⁸ See the general correspondence in GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 190.

³⁹ Prussian Minister of Education, Internal Communication, September 29, 1920, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

⁴⁰ Carl H. Becker, *Ansprache des Preussischen Kultusministers für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung bei der Jahresfeier der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 5 November 1927*, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1595.

⁴¹ Jäckh, "Das Dritte Jahr," 5-6.

of Director of Academic Programs in 1930, Wolfers served as the Administrative Director. In 1930, the role of president would also be created, to which Jäckh was appointed.

Jäckh's new venture had multiple – in part also contradictory – roots. The DHfP emerged out of liberal reformers' debates on political education, lack of political leadership, and educational reforms.⁴² In particular, Naumann's short-lived "Citizens School" influenced Jäckh's plans.⁴³ At the same time, the DHfP was also a product of World War One, the "great educator of a new Germany."⁴⁴ The DHfP played a crucial role in providing political education and teaching political tolerance,⁴⁵ because regular universities avoided political education "out of fear from party politics or out of incapacity for nonpartisanship."⁴⁶ It was therefore a reaction to political life's radicalization and a partial answer to the necessities of the new republican state.

In the post-war context, the debates on Germany's role in world affairs necessarily influenced the School's establishment. In a memorandum on the founding of the DHfP, Heuss argued that the new School was "an important tool for the restoration of the German state" because Germany's destruction continued to be the goal of the former

⁴² Ernst Jäckh, *Die "alte" Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (Berlin: W. Büxenstein GmbH., 1952), 8-9 and Ernst Jäckh, "Zur Vorgeschichte der deutschen Hochschule für Politik," *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 1 (1923-1924), 17.

⁴³ Theodor Heuss, "Friedrich Naumann als Politischer Pädagoge," in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 121-133 and Theodor Heuss, "Deutsche Hochschule für Politik," in *Weltpolitische Bildungsarbeit an preussischen Hochschulen Festschrift aus Anlass des 50. Geburtstages des preussischen Ministers für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung Herrn Professor Dr. C.H. Becker* (Berlin: Verlag Reimar Hobbing, 1926), 156.

⁴⁴ Ernst Jäckh, "Remarks on the Hochschule and the German Political Education," *International Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 3 (1929), 197.

⁴⁵ "Jahresfeier 1925," *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1925), 21-22, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1111.

⁴⁶ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Aufbau und Arbeit* (Berlin: DHfP, 1926), 6. Enclosed in Hans Simons to Schriftleitung der Mitteilungen des Verbandes der Deutschen Hochschulen, October 8, 1926, BArch, R 8088/402.

war enemies' peace policy.⁴⁷ German elites thus did not only conceive science and culture in relationship to a recovery of industrial and economic competitiveness, but also as the only fields where German dignity could be re-asserted – as Becker's political thought also confirmed.

The relationship between science and national power – a theme that crisscrossed official addresses and writings of the faculty members – had its historical antecedent in Prussia after the Napoleonic wars. Jäckh indirectly established this connection by viewing the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität (founded in 1810) as the model of the French *École Libre*, in which he had found inspiration for his own venture. He linked France's reconstruction after 1870 and its victory in the World War to the establishment of the *École Libre* in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. He thus viewed political education as functional for the rebirth of Germany's honor and development and, conversely, its lack as the main cause of the lost war.⁴⁸

Jäckh contrasted, however, his School's internationalism to the “revenge chauvinism” of the *École Libre*. The DHfP would aimed “for the intellectual and spiritual reconstruction of Germany – of a new Germany and through it also of a new Europe in a new spirit (though not the senseless, violent 'spirit' of Versailles), so that the dead of this war have not been sacrificed in vain.”⁴⁹ The ability to attract foreign students and in particular the fact that several foreign governments started sending civil servants for

⁴⁷ Theodor Heuss, “Denkschrift zur Errichtung einer Deutschen Hochschule für Politik,” in *Politische Bildung*, 33.

⁴⁸ See the speeches in *Politische Bildung: Wille, Wesen, Ziel, Weg. Sechs Reden gehalten bei der Eröffnung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1921) and Rühlmann, “Das Problem: Politische Führer, eine Bildungsfrage,” 234-235.

⁴⁹ Ernst Jäckh in *Politische Bildung*, 31.

training to the DHfP rather than to the French *École Libre*, as they had done in the past, confirmed this internationalist outlook.⁵⁰

Most importantly, however, the DHfP was rooted in its leadership's conception of liberal democracy. In fact, "the parliamentary system is senseless and barren of results unless the opposition is recognized from inner conviction and equal rights are accorded to it."⁵¹ It was necessary to overcome the influence of a mentality associated with the Prussian state and to establish "democracy as a form of life."⁵² In fact, democracy – as Jäckh later described to an international audience – was a "mentality," which implied "responsibility of the people towards the community, not towards any class or caste, and responsibility of the leaders not towards any Party, but towards the community."⁵³ The new German democracy could survive only if Germans developed a "political-democratic sense of duty," without which democracy risked degenerating "into demagogu ... into rule of the street, of the most one-sided class interests."⁵⁴ The radicalization of domestic conflicts, the "madness of the disputes," and the "brutality of the lazy common sense" gave urgency to Germans' political education, as well as to the formation of a mature political will.⁵⁵ Germany's fragmented political society required a "chivalrous attitude" that could only be rooted in an objective understanding of political dynamics.⁵⁶

Indeed, political education could de-radicalize political conflicts by creating a mature political will. Political education thus had to conceptualize politics as a science and not purely as an art. During the opening ceremony of the DHfP, several speakers

⁵⁰ Jäckh, "Das Dritte Jahr," 2. See also *Ausländerzahlen in den Semestern*, 23 September 1930, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 287.

⁵¹ Wilhelm Haas, "Political Education," *The Hibbert Journal*, vol. 25, no. 4 (1927), 605.

⁵² Heuss, *Die neue Demokratie*, 155-159.

⁵³ Jäckh, "Remarks on the Hochschule and the German Political Education," 200.

⁵⁴ Rühlmann, "Das Problem: Politische Führer, eine Bildungsfrage," 233 and 234.

⁵⁵ Heuss, *Zwischen Gestern und Morgen*, 20 and 21.

⁵⁶ The reference to "chivalrous attitude" is in Haas, "Political Education," 605.

pointed to the “artistic” side of politics and acknowledged that not all the characteristics of the political genius could be taught or learned. Nonetheless, Walter Simons (at the time Foreign Minister and later president of the Court of Justice) stressed the possibility to free Germans from the blinders that had narrowed their political views in the previous years through the study of politics.⁵⁷ It was possible to conceptualize politics as a science when referring to the scientific basis of politics, to the examination of problems of politics, and to the examination of politics from a historical perspective.⁵⁸

The unity of political knowledge and political will could help Germany overcome its internal provincialism.

Knowledge without will, must remain unproductive; will without knowledge, may become productive. A will that grows wild imbrutes, foams, destroys like a torrent; also the assassin’s misdeed refers to the “best will,” to the “best intention.” ... Then: even will needs and requires knowledge. ... A knowledge of facts, without illusions and sympathies, clear and hard, impartial and incorruptible, judicious and farsighted; free of the nonsense of slogans, free of the absurdity of prejudices, free of the anomaly and degeneracy of all “ism”; a knowledge of the relationships of events, of the connection of the present with the past and with the future.⁵⁹

Knowledge had to regulate and direct political will. Indeed, “Nothing is more dangerous, both in theory and in practice, than to confound the will to politics with the political will” because interest in politics was not necessarily the ability to give proper form and direction to this interest.⁶⁰ Hence, political maturity required “nonpartisan and calm, therefore scientific” knowledge of the state and its institutions. Political capacity of

⁵⁷ Walter Simons in *Politische Bildung*, 20.

⁵⁸ Wilhelm Haas, “Politik als Wissenschaft, eine Prolegomenon,” *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1923-1924), 36.

⁵⁹ Jäckh, “Das Dritte Jahr,” 9-10.

⁶⁰ Haas, “Political Education,” 598.

judgment pre-supposed both will and education. Accordingly, the “first duty” of the intellectual was to familiarize Germans with the working of the state and its institutions.⁶¹

The Jäckh circle conceptualized political education as the cultivation of the spirit of *Überparteilichkeit*. This nonpartisanship did not simply refer to an equal distance to political parties, but rather to a “state ethos” and “will of duty.”⁶² In other words, as Hans Simons argued, political education was the education of the will in order to awaken a “particular ethos” and to introduce the individual to “objective, comprehensible facts,” which could lead to “conclusions with general validity.”⁶³ Since individuals could not be de-politicized, objective political education had to de-radicalize politics and contain their negative effects. In fact, the more politically educated a person was, the more politically neutral he would become, that is, “by renouncing one’s own tendency, to fit themselves into a chain of events codetermined with others.”⁶⁴ The liberals of the Jäckh circle thus linked the good working of the liberal democratic system to the establishment of a certain political ethos, which they rooted in the concept of *Überparteilichkeit*, intended as the politics of civility.

Überparteilichkeit was a key aspect of these intellectuals’ conceptualization of political discourse. The essence of a liberal parliamentary system was the willingness to view political contrasts as negotiable. This in turn demanded a political discourse that, by being rational and argumentative, was based on an objective discussion of political facts. This politics of civility required a political imagination that would help to see “the

⁶¹ Hermann Heller, “Arbeiter und wissenschaftliche Politik” (1919/20), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 581.

⁶² Ernst Jäckh, “Zwei Jahre Deutsche Hochschule fuer Politik,” in Ernst Troeltsch, *Naturrecht und Humanität in der Weltpolitik* (Berlin: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1923).

⁶³ Simons, *Politische Schulung und Hochschule*, 5.

⁶⁴ Simons, *Politische Schulung und Hochschule*, 10.

opponent in the political game” as a person and thus to “discover that even an opponent and his view have some inner right.”⁶⁵ Accordingly, the politics of civility entailed an “attitude of correct distance,” that is, a distance from one’s own “emotions, motives, and aims” and thus “the inner freedom ... is nothing else than the freedom I have won toward myself, my ideas, and my passion.”⁶⁶ The liberals of the Jäckh circle developed through the principle of *Überparteilichkeit* a conception of civil society, and attempted to instill the ideal of civic discourse in Germany’s fragmented society.

Civility, however, could only de-radicalize politics if it was combined with an acceptance of the new political system. Unable or unwilling to endorse democracy whole-heartedly, which most considered a historical necessity rather than the absolute best form of government, these intellectuals appealed to the “enemies” of the republic with what was an “appeal to reason, to political judiciousness, to the national sense of duty.”⁶⁷ In a conference of the “Democratic Student’s Union,” Meinecke emblematically stated

The calm, objective debate will be the best way to distinguish positive and arguable arguments from mere ill-considered moods and perceptions, on which to a large extent is based their [the enemies of the democratic state] cool attitude. To prepare such an arena for the peaceful competition of opinions and to create through this competition new commonalities between us and those still hesitant and vacillating, this I consider the practical goal of our conference.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Haas, “Political Education,” 604.

⁶⁶ Haas, “Political Education,” 606 and 607.

⁶⁷ Friedrich Meinecke, “Zweiter Referat,” in *Die deutschen Universitäten und der heutige Staat*, edited by Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich Meinecke, and Gustav Radbruch (Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), 18.

⁶⁸ Friedrich Meinecke, “Zweiter Referat,” in *Die deutschen Universitäten und der heutige Staat*, edited by Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich Meinecke, and Gustav Radbruch (Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), 18-19.

The key point was – Meinecke argued – to rationally decide about the less harmful form of state, which he believed to be the republic. Hence, he aimed to broaden the support for the republic.⁶⁹

Meinecke participated in a series of conferences that focused on German universities' role in public life. The intention of the organizers including Meinecke and Delbrück was to reunite all those personalities who supported the Republic either because of the post-war era's necessity or because of enthusiasm for popular sovereignty's ethical value. The signatories deemed this task to be urgent because of academics' rejection of the new state form and of their influence on the youth.⁷⁰

Not everybody appeared able or willing to make the famous second step from acceptance out of necessity to full-hearted endorsement that Meinecke hoped for, “who has done the first step, must now, again because of the state's needs, also make the second step and wish that the new form of government also grows in the nation's heart in order to take deep roots.”⁷¹ To this end, Jäckh and his closest associates developed the DHfP as a practical school of public affairs. The cooperation with men of praxis had been their goal since the institute's inception. In fact, on occasion of the founding of the DHfP, both Heuss and Jäckh expressed the hope that the republican political elites would serve as faculty members and hence gave visible expression to the link between theory and practice.⁷² Jäckh described the School's approach as the “method of the *working group* –

⁶⁹ Meinecke, *Republik, Bürgertum und Jugend*, 14-15.

⁷⁰ Invitation, February 1926, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 5340. See also Invitation, February 1927, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 5340. The key speeches of the first conference were published as Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich Meinecke, and Gustav Radbruch, *Die deutschen Universitäten und der heutige Staat* (Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926).

⁷¹ Friedrich Meinecke, “Zweiter Referat,” in *Die deutschen Universitäten und der heutige Staat*, edited by Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich Meinecke, and Gustav Radbruch (Tübingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), 29.

⁷² Theodor Heuss, “Rundschreiben, October 2, 1920,” in *Briefe 1918-1933*, 144 and Ernst Jäckh in *Politische Bildung*, 28-29.

a working group between the experience of the practitioners, the research of the scientists, and the intuition of political art.”⁷³ The involvement of political practitioners in the teaching activities thus confirmed the School’s practical orientation.

The practical goal of the DHfP was therefore to provide vocational training to men and women of the political practice, or whose work was influenced by political dynamics.⁷⁴ The first published program confirmed the practical rather than academic orientation of the DHfP by positively contrasting “the position of the responsible citizen who stands at the center of the stream of events and is called to act” to “the distance of survey-like scientific observations.”⁷⁵ Accordingly, Heuss identified as central to the School’s mission “the education of men and women who are willing and able to judge objectively [and] act bravely wherever work and social duty may place them.”⁷⁶ Consequentially, the School’s prospective students were politicians in the strictest sense, teachers that had to address civic education, social workers and members of interest groups, and – broadly speaking – civil servants interested in the field.⁷⁷ Specifically, the DHfP focused on the political education of crucial categories such as the journalist, the engineer who, as the person in charge of the day-to-day manufacturing processes, had to

⁷³ Ernst Jäckh in *Politische Bildung*, 29.

⁷⁴ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Aufbau und Arbeit* (Berlin: DHfP, 1926). Enclosed in Hans Simons to Schriftleitung der Mitteilungen des Verbandes der Deutschen Hochschulen, October 8, 1926, BArch, R 8088/402. See also Wilhelm Drews in *Politische Bildung*, 14.

⁷⁵ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1920/21*, p. 10. GStA, Berlin, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 1.

⁷⁶ Theodor Heuss, “Denkschrift zur Errichtung einer Deutschen Hochschule für Politik,” in *Politische Bildung*, 37.

⁷⁷ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1920/21*, pp. 10-11, GStA, Berlin, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 1.

deal on a daily basis with an increasingly politicized working class, and of the worker himself.⁷⁸

The heterogeneity of students' professional background testified to the broad scope of the DHfP.⁷⁹ The School took the difficult path of finding an equilibrium between an institute of higher education and a center for vocational training in trying to fulfill its different aims.⁸⁰ In the first years, political education was centered on general politics, sociology and social policy, economics, cultural policy and civic education, and sciences of the state.⁸¹ In a memorandum of December 1923, the "Student Committee" restated the goals of the DHfP of providing "an opportunity for the acquisition of systematic knowledge, the understanding of key problems, and the ability of independent thinking, without being limited like any other university to the academic community." In addition, however, it also pointed out the need to develop the educational program.⁸²

With the end of the post-war political and economic crisis, the leadership of the School stabilized the institute. During the foundational phase, until the winter semester 1923-24, the School's emphasis on history and political theory responded to the need to come to terms with the war and the revolutionary experience of the winter of 1918-19, as well as to establish a continuity with the pre-war period.⁸³ In 1924-25, the DHfP

⁷⁸ Goetz Briefs, "Ingenieur und Politische Bildung," in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 165-172, Emil Dovifat, "Die Politische Schulung des Journalisten," in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 151-164, and Carl Mennicke, "Die politische Bildung des Industriearbeiters," *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1924-1925), 1-5.

⁷⁹ Lehnert, "'Politik als Wissenschaft'," 447.

⁸⁰ Numerous scholars have analyzed the structure and development of the general curriculum of the DHfP. The scholarly debate has primarily focused on when – and if at all – modern political sciences were developed at the DHfP. For references, see notes 59 and 60 in Chapter One.

⁸¹ See the curricula in GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 1-9.

⁸² *Denkschrift des Hörerausschusses der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, December 1923, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 239.

⁸³ Lehnert, "'Politik als Wissenschaft'," 451.

systematized the curriculum in a regular two-year program with a final exam,⁸⁴ hence signaling its progressive consolidation. With the stabilization of the republic, the DHfP consolidated its position in Weimar society, and domestic politics (with an emphasis on practical training) played a central role in its educational programs by the mid-1920s.⁸⁵

The generous financial support of a network of philanthropists close to the Naumann circle made possible consolidation of the DHfP. The founding circle had established School as a “free” (that is, private rather than public) institute. As Drews argued on occasion of the opening ceremony, this “free self-activity and free cooperation” reflected both the “material needs of the coming times” and the “willingness to make sacrifices” in support of the education of the German nation.⁸⁶ The DHfP, therefore, primarily relied on the private support of “democratic friends and supporters” such as Robert Bosch and Walter Siemens,⁸⁷ whereas the Reich and Prussian state only provided for various types of infrastructure.⁸⁸ The School was a public benefit organization, which – according to its by-laws – aimed to support “the political and civic education of all strata of the population.”⁸⁹

The School also developed special courses in close association with state and federal ministries. These special courses addressed specific interest areas, as for example the decried lack of expertise in foreign policy.⁹⁰ In 1923, the DHfP reached an agreement

⁸⁴ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis SS 1925*, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 10.

⁸⁵ Lehnert, “Politik als Wissenschaft,” 451-453.

⁸⁶ Wilhelm Drews in *Politische Bildung*, 8.

⁸⁷ Jäckh, *Die “alte” Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, 12.

⁸⁸ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik to Ministry of Education, October 31, 1921, pp. 5-6, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200. See also Prussian Minister of Education, Internal Communication, September 29, 1920, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

⁸⁹ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Satzung*, n.d., BArch, R 1501/125662.

⁹⁰ In the early 1920s, commentators were still discussing the problem of the study of foreign affairs and decried the discrepancy between the existence of numerous associations devoted to this area and the lack of consistent knowledge and expertise in the field. Otto Hoetzsch – member of the DNVP and close to both

with the Foreign Office for the training of candidates for the diplomatic service.⁹¹

Consequently, leading personalities of the DHfP drafted memoranda on the training of civil servants for the Foreign Office. They stressed the importance of understanding politics' broad basis and of relying on instructors with practical experience in diplomacy.⁹² In 1926, the Ministry of the Interior stressed the importance of general political education for civil servants and recommended the work of the DHfP. In a circular letter to federal agencies, the Ministry even suggested to include attendance and certificates gained at the DHfP in personnel files.⁹³

Jäckh could, therefore, legitimately affirm that the DHfP “practically cooperated” with the German state by assisting the government in crucial areas. The School established the “Seminar for Youth Welfare” (*Seminar für Jugendwohlfart*) for the training of men and women for the new youth welfare offices that the 1922 Reich Youth Welfare Law had created. In addition, it participated in the “Civic Week” (*Staatsbürgerliche Woche*) organized by the Federal Minister of the Interior, in the “Administrative Week” (*Verwaltungswoche*) organized by the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, and the “Vocational-Pedagogic Week” (*Berufspädagogische Woche*) (providing civic training to teachers at professional and vocational schools) organized by the

the PK and the DHfP – stressed the need to coordinate the existing institutions in the field in order to prepare candidates for the Foreign Office. Otto Hoetzsch to Carl H. Becker, April 6, 1922, GStA PK, VI. NI, Becker, C. H., Nr. 4125.

⁹¹ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1923/24*, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 7.

⁹² *Bemerkungen über die Ausbildung der Anwärter des auswärtigen Dienstes*, n.d., GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 64. See also Moritz J. Bonn, *Aufzeichnungen betreffend die Stellung der Hochschule für Politik für die Ausbildung der Beamten des Auswärtigen Amtes*, n.d., GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 64 and Hans Simons to Carl H. Becker, 3 August 1926, pp. 2-3, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 190.

⁹³ Reichminister des Innern to Obersten Reichsbehörden, May 19, 1926, BArch, R 43-I/773

Prussian Ministry of Commerce.⁹⁴ Hence, the DHfP could claim, “It is not saying too much that the German School of Politics has become more and more the central department to which the new tasks that emerge from the needs of the new state for the different agencies and ministries are assigned.”⁹⁵

This close relationship with practical politics, however, also caused difficulties. During the academic year of 1924-25, three electoral cycles disrupted the activities of the School because faculty members were involved in political campaigns and the student body was “hit by the artificial sharpening of contradictions [and] the joint efforts for knowledge were alienated by the comfortable and confident slogans of propaganda.”⁹⁶ In addition, while in the aftermath of the revolution students had been eager to learn about politics, now – in the words of Hans Simons – almost everyone had a “political viewpoint” and “everywhere we see the fear of new insights, the preoccupation of being thrown by knowledge and awareness of the calmness of [party] programs in the unrest of problems.”⁹⁷ These difficulties foreshadowed the complexity of clearly separating party politics from *Überparteilichkeit* in an educational institute that, by being conceived as a school of public affairs, inevitably was involved in the political life and controversies of Germany’s young democracy.

In the first half of the 1920s, therefore, the concept of *Überparteilichkeit* – coupled with a specific understanding of the working of a liberal parliamentary democracy – guided the development of the DHfP. In addition, the practical direction of

⁹⁴ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis SS 1923*, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 6

⁹⁵ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik to Ministry of Education, October 31, 1921, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 200.

⁹⁶ “Jahresfeier 1925,” *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1925), 24, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1111.

⁹⁷ “Jahresfeier 1925,” *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1925), 23, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1111.

the School found expression in the numerous collaborative efforts with both state and federal agencies. Regular curriculum, special courses, and seminars provided practical training and “objective” knowledge and thus aimed to create a common basis for a political discussion that averted ideologies and was rather rooted in a factual and objective understanding of political processes. From this perspective, therefore, the faculty of the DHfP attempted to insert a notion of “civil discourse” rooted in *Überparteilichkeit* and able to support the working of Germany’s young democracy in Weimar’s radicalized public sphere.

The *Politische Kolleg* and the Education of the *Volk*

The young conservatives of the “June Club” viewed the *Politische Kolleg* and later the *Hochschule für nationale Politik* as the tools to awaken the German nation’s communitarian bonds. These intellectuals rooted their educational philosophy in the persistence of the war emergency, which they viewed as the key precondition for any new form of societal organization. In fact, only the emergency could allow young conservatives to revive the German nation’s collective political will. Educators had therefore the task to instill the urgency to act in the nation. In so doing, young conservatives placed themselves at the center of the Weimar Republic’s radicalized public sphere. At the same time, however, they also linked the effectiveness of their conception of political education to the outside political context. Inevitably, these educational endeavors would lose appeal with the stabilization of the Weimar Republic, as would be the case for their political rhetoric in general.

Young conservatives viewed the political education of the youth as the solution to the dilettantism of Germany’s political class and to society’s fragmentation. Like the

liberals of the Jäckh circle, Moeller-Bruck decried the fact that politics was still trapped in the “domestic political quarrel.” In fact, “all our German politics ultimately is nothing else” – he lamented – “than a continuation of miserable party politics with all the attending ills of envy, jealousy, vote catching, in the process it is totally forgotten that politics is a matter of the nation.”⁹⁸ Similarly, Boehm repeatedly stressed that Germany’s public opinion lacked an understanding of political problems, which resulted in Germans’ “apolitical obtuseness.”⁹⁹ Political education thus became the means by which to rebuild the German nation and to reestablish its international prestige.

The *Volk* and “the emergency” were key elements in young conservatives’ educational plans. In fact, they aspired to recreate the emergency situation of the war and renew the German nation’s spiritual community through education. Boehm had addressed the question of the war’s educational ideals already towards the end of the conflict. He argued that educational reforms alone were unable to maintain the “nation’s experience of the war,” and hence suggested that it would be the task of educators to transmit these values.¹⁰⁰ Consequentially, young conservatives viewed it as their task as educators and thought leaders to awaken the German nation and instill the spiritual and communitarian values of the war in it.

These intellectuals aimed to develop the German *Volk*’s collective political capacities. While a “wild demonical possession” could drive the political genius to act when confronted with the “emergency,” collective political action – Karl Hoffmann asserted – required an ongoing effort based on collective work. It was therefore crucial to

⁹⁸ Moeller-Bruck, “Das Laster der Innenpolitik,” 134-135.

⁹⁹ Max H. Boehm, “Zur österreichischen Frage,” *Die Grenzboten*, vol. 42 (1918), 72. See also Max H. Boehm, “Nationalversammlung und Parteien,” *Die Grenzboten*, vol. 48 (1918), 197-201.

¹⁰⁰ Max H. Boehm, “Krieg und Schulreform,” *Deutsche Revue*, vol. 41, no. 3 (July 17, 1917), 104.

create an “atmosphere” in which collective political forces could develop. In the absence of a political genius, thought leaders – Hoffmann concluded – could have the “insight” to set in motion the process that would create a collective political sense.¹⁰¹

Hoffman viewed Spahn’s work on the German *Volk* and on its Central European destiny as the “insight” that could awaken Germany’s collective political sense.¹⁰² The concept of the *Volk* and its connections to the “space” (*Raum*) were central elements of young conservatives’ educational philosophy. Communities – Spahn argued – were not the simple sum of individuals, but “conduct[ed] an existence beyond the individuality.”¹⁰³ Education had to build the cultural and spiritual bonds that could integrate the individual into the broader national community, which economic developments and individualism had weakened already in the years preceding the war.¹⁰⁴ The *Volk*, however, could develop only if aware of its linkages to the Central European “space.”¹⁰⁵ Spahn thus linked the German nation’s spiritual and cultural unity to the Central European space. These “roots” served to avert the multiplicity that characterized modern societies.

From this perspective, Germany’s weak position in central Europe confirmed both the incapacity of its political leadership and the deficiencies of its political education. Even Spahn linked France’s military victory to the activities of the *École Libre*. He saw Germany’s future path in Prussia’s educational policies of 1809 and in France’s

¹⁰¹ Karl Hoffmann, “Erziehung zur Staatskunst,” *Die Grenzboten*, vol. 7 (1920), 199-200.

¹⁰² Hoffmann, “Erziehung zur Staatskunst,” 200.

¹⁰³ Martin Spahn, “Die Bedeutung des Geschichtsunterrichts für die Einordnung des Einzelnen in das Gemeinschaftsleben,” *Deutsche Abende im Zentralinstitut für Erziehung und Unterricht*, vol. 3 (1918), 4.

¹⁰⁴ Spahn, “Die Bedeutung des Geschichtsunterrichts,” 13.

¹⁰⁵ Spahn, “Mitteleuropa,” 36. See also Martin Spahn, “Die Einheit der nationalen Politik” (1925), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 42-54, Spahn, “Im Ringen um den deutschen Staat der Gegenwart,” 33-41, and Martin Spahn, “Volk im Raum” (1931), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 80-86.

experience of the previous fifty years.¹⁰⁶ The German nation's "will and reason" needed a goal or an "insight," which for Spahn could only be one.

Do the French mold Mitteleuropa against us, then with it will have an end our historical worth. ... By contrast, do we mold Mitteleuropa, then through it we will become again Europe's leading nation. ... The mission is: Mittel-Europa!¹⁰⁷

At the center of the educational program of the young conservatives was therefore the need to awaken the political will of the German nation, which was intended as a collective entity. In the absence of a strong political leadership, the thought leaders of the "young Germany" had to lead Germans' politicization. The state of emergency and crisis of the post-war years had created the conditions that Hoffmann deemed necessary to form a collective political will. The confrontation with the forces of Versailles and the historical *Mitteleuropa* destiny of the German *Volk* became the means young conservatives aimed to mobilize and politicize the nation.

The *Politische Kolleg* was thus firmly rooted in the ideals of the "June Club." Spahn had aimed to create an Institute of Foreign Policy at the University of Strasbourg during the war. The experience of the conflict and revolution, however, had moved him towards broader efforts that could address the connections between foreign policy and all other political dimensions.¹⁰⁸ Against the background of revolutionary unrest, the PK's founding group aimed to "save the last authoritarian bonds in the midst of the general

¹⁰⁶ Martin Spahn, "Die Pariser politische Hochschule und Frankreichs Wiederaufstieg nach 1871," *Die Grenzboten*, no. 79 (January 7, 1920).

¹⁰⁷ Spahn, "Mitteleuropa," 38.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., Nr. 164. On Spahn's plans in Strasbourg see also Gabriele Clemens, *Martin Spahn und der rechts Katholizismus in der Weimarer Republik* (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 1983), page 49, footnote 4.

disintegration” and strengthen the nation’s capacity to resist its enemies.¹⁰⁹ The PK thus aimed to overcome political parties and focus on the “whole” through “the education of a specific kind of German political will.” The sequence of war, collapse, and ongoing emergency – they believed – made this approach necessary and possible.¹¹⁰

Under the direction of Spahn and – for the first four years – Gleichen, the PK aimed to overcome the fragmentation of Germany’s political society by means of political education.¹¹¹ The PK focused on Germany’s internal fragmentation and aimed to contribute to the defense of Germany’s borders and to the ideals of *Großdeutschland* as well as *Mitteleuropa*.¹¹² This focus on Germany made the PK “no place ... in which the foreigner can feel at home as the German does. It aims at Germans, it wants to help the German nation.”¹¹³ This ideological focus also clearly emerged from the trenchant comments about students such as the one about a Graf Brockdorf-Würzburg defined as “intellectual, decadent, crass individualist, corrosive effect on the lectures as well as on the social gatherings.”¹¹⁴ The PK was therefore an educational institute aiming to strengthen the political will of the German nation and resist the disrupting penetration of Western ideals.

To this end, the PK established a series of “working groups” to discuss and research questions deemed to be crucial for the nation’s political life. Boehm directed

¹⁰⁹ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Das politische Kolleg,” *Deutsche Rundschau* (1921).

¹¹⁰ Gleichen, “Das politische Kolleg.”

¹¹¹ Politische Kolleg, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis für da Lehrjahr vom 13. November 1922 bis zum 18. Mai 1923*, p. 9, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 174.

¹¹² Chronist, “Politisches Kolleg,” 1. See also Martin Spahn, “Ziehlhafte politische Bildung. Aus Anlaß des 10 jährigen Bestehens des Politischen Kollegs” (1931), in Martin Spahn, *Für den Reichsgedanken. Historisch-politische Aufsätze, 1915-1934* (Berlin/Bonn: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1936), 104-108.

¹¹³ Politische Kolleg, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis für da Lehrjahr vom 13. November 1922 bis zum 18. Mai 1923*, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303 Nr. 174.

¹¹⁴ Karl Rosenberg, *Bericht über den 13. Lehrgang für Studenten, 17. bis 24. Oktober 1922*, n.d., GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 174.

group focusing on “the problems of nationalities,” which was the most active of these “working groups.” This group, focusing on *Volk* and irredentism, soon gained a certain level of independence and moved out of the rooms of the PK in January 1921.¹¹⁵ In addition, the PK organized “working groups” focusing on “foreign policy” (directed by Spahn and Hoffmann) – initially, until the illness that led to his suicide, Moeller-Bruck directed an offshoot of this group investigating the war guilt question on the basis of war propaganda.¹¹⁶ Another “working group” focused on “corporatism” and soon developed an offshoot group investigating questions regarding trade union and political parties.¹¹⁷ The other “working groups” focusing on publications on civic education, liberal arts education, and propaganda were less successful for changes in leadership and lack of financial support.¹¹⁸ These “working groups” aimed to identify specific issues out of which the “organism of the German Empire” could develop.¹¹⁹

In addition, the PK established regular courses that aimed to strengthen the roots of the German nation. In the second year it instituted the “Spandau Courses,” in which personalities from different social groups discussed the economic, social, and political issues over a period of 8-10 weeks.¹²⁰ The special “national-political courses” confirmed the importance of national awakening for the circle of the PK. Indeed, the PK organized

¹¹⁵ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, n.d., pp. 1-2, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., 164.

¹¹⁶ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, n.d., p. 2, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., 164.

¹¹⁷ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, n.d., p. 3, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., 164.

¹¹⁸ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, n.d., p. 3, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., 164.

¹¹⁹ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, n.d., p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., 164.

¹²⁰ Politische Kolleg, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis für da Lehrjahr vom 13. November 1922 bis zum 18. Mai 1923*, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 174.

39 courses with 1190 participants between October 1, 1921 and October 1, 1925.¹²¹

These courses developed in various German areas in cooperation with like-minded organizations and thus represented an attempt to extend the influence of the political ideas of the young conservatives beyond the city of Berlin.

The *Politische Kolleg* merged with the “June Club” in January 1921 with the aim to enlarge their sphere of influence and be more effective in their tasks.¹²² The “June Club” ended its activities as a separate entity in conjunction to this merger,¹²³ and Gleichen and Spahn constituted the Board of Directors of the newly established association of the PK.¹²⁴ This unity, however, did not last long and the “June Club” was reestablished by the end of the year, hence foreshadowing the internal dissents that eventually would disrupt the circle of the young conservatives.

In January 1922, a special assembly of members decided to exclude from the PK those members who were not actively collaborating with its activities.¹²⁵ By accepting these members in the re-founded “June Club,” the leaders of the circle sharpened the distinction between the educational institute and the “June Club.”¹²⁶ The goals of the “June Club” consisted of working “in the service of the political, cultural, and economic renewal of *Großdeutschland*,” as the new by-laws restated. At the same time, the by-laws reiterated the nonpartisan character of the association, “Sectarian, party, and class differences are excluded. Party tactics and party politics will find no place in the life of

¹²¹ Politische Kolleg, *Bericht über die nationalpolitischen Lehrkurse des Politischen Kolleg im Jahrfünft 1921-1925*, n.d., BArch, R 118/7.

¹²² Chronist, “Politisches Kolleg,” 1.

¹²³ Reichskommissar für Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, *Vermerk*, January 18, 1923, BArch, R 1507/417.

¹²⁴ Minutes Meeting, January 12, 1921, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 8993.

¹²⁵ Werner Wirths, Circular Letter, January 19, 1922, BArch, R 118/12

¹²⁶ Politische Kolleg, Circular Letter, January 24, 1922, BArch, R 118/12

CLUB.”¹²⁷ At the beginning of 1923, the “June Club” had 150 members and the PK 30 members.¹²⁸

The relationship between the PK and the School of Politics remained ambiguous. Young conservatives continued to accuse the DHfP of being a stronghold of liberalism in Germany.¹²⁹ At the same time, Alfred Hugenberg – who substantially financed the PK – tried to assume control of the DHfP in 1921-22 through a fifty-one percent participation and on the condition that Spahn would become its new director.¹³⁰ Jäckh, however, restated the political independence of his institute during the celebrations for the second anniversary of the DHfP.¹³¹ Nonetheless, Gleichen also pointed to the cooperation between the two institutes symbolized by the figure of Röseler,¹³² who would become a member of the Board of Directors of the DHfP in 1920-21. While initially co-opted by Jäckh – and hesitating to withdraw because of Vögler’s advice – Otto Hoetzsch eventually joined the PK in which he saw a tool to counter the crisis of the DNVP.¹³³

After Hugenberg’s failed attempt to take over the control of the DHfP, the leadership of the PK decided to establish an institute in Berlin that would more closely resemble the traditional university format.¹³⁴ The speakers at the two-year anniversary of the DHfP defined this new institute as a “school of the party” because of its association

¹²⁷ Werner Wirths, Circular Letter, January 19, 1922, BArch, R 118/12

¹²⁸ Reichskommissar für Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, Vermerk, January 18, 1923, BArch, R 1507/417.

¹²⁹ Anachronist, “Bismarck, Foerster und der Fortschritt,” *Gewissen*, vol. 3, no. 15 (April, 1921), 2.

¹³⁰ Jäckh, *Die “alte” Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, 13.

¹³¹ Jäckh, “Zwei Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik,” 28.

¹³² Hutten, “Politische Professoren,” 1.

¹³³ Otto Hoetzsch to Martin Spahn, August 19, 1922, p. 2, BArch, R 118/46/Heft 2.

¹³⁴ Politische Kolleg to Eberhard Graf Kalckreuth, September 25, 1922, BArch, R 118/46/Heft 2, Politische Kolleg to Hermann von Kuhl, September 25, 1922, BArch, R 118/46/Heft 2, and Politische Kolleg to Karl von Loesch, September 25, 1922, BArch, R 118/46/Heft 2.

with Hoetzsch and saw in it a reaction to the failed attempt to gain control of the DHfP.¹³⁵ Spahn, however, stressed the practical approach of the new *Hochschule für nationale Politik*, which stayed “in exchange and intercourse with other organizations, worked with them and agreed to organic collaborations with them.” In particular, the “June Club” was the “forecourt” of the institute where new friends could be won and where the “practical world” could inspire instructors.¹³⁶

Spahn restated the necessity to address the collapse of the state, the oppression of the nation, and the occupation of German territories on the occasion of the opening of the *Hochschule für nationale Politik* on November 13, 1922. The new institute would develop, in his words, “a nonpartisan national education, which was truly focused on the people’s community.” The other speakers reiterated the theme of national unity and internal solidarity by stressing – in the words of Reinhold Georg Quaatz – the guiding principle of the “national community of the German people” and the need – as Otto de la Chevallerie stated – to reconnect the academic world “with the remaining activities of the political society and of the civil community.”¹³⁷ The curriculum of the new institute described Germany’s return to international power as a path between East and West that had its roots in centuries-old historical developments.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Jäckh had announced, “that capital group had to resign to now try the party school to which they wanted to degrade our School of Politics without us.” Jäckh, “Zwei Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik,” 28. See also Unidentified Author to Alfred Hugenberg, October 28, 1922, BArch, R 118/36

¹³⁶ Martin Spahn, *Bericht über das Politische Kolleg, seine Art und Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1920/25*, 5-6, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Solger, F., Nr.164.

¹³⁷ “Hochschule für nationale Politik. Ansprachen bei der Eröffnung am 13. November 1922,” *Gewissen Beilage*, vol. 4, no. 39 (November 20, 1922), 1.

¹³⁸ Hochschule für nationale Politik, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis für das Lehrjahr vom 13. November 1922 bis zum 18. Mai 1923*, p. 2, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 76, Va, Sekt. 2, Tit. X, Nr. 214.

Republican authorities closely monitored the violent and aggressive rhetoric of the young conservatives.¹³⁹ In January 1925, Gleichen informed Spahn that the political police had a dossier on the “June Club,” the PK, and the *Hochschule für nationale Politik*. He added, however, that he was able to control the information that would be included in the agency’s files through a “connection with an official.”¹⁴⁰ Perhaps, as a result, the actions of the authorities against the organizational activities of the young conservatives remained limited.¹⁴¹ As the only exception, the *Gewissen* had to temporarily suspend its activities for publishing accusations against Chancellor Joseph Wirth in the aftermath of Rathenau’s assassination,¹⁴²

By contrast, Stadtler was repeatedly at the center of public controversies. He attacked what he deemed to be the dishonest policy of the Wirth government in October 1921.¹⁴³ Accused of treason because allegedly revealing secret military plans, Stadtler was acquitted.¹⁴⁴ Testifying on his behalf, Gustav Stresemann deemed Stadtler to be incapable of treason but added that he was “unwise as a politician and frequently unaware of the implications of what he writes and says.”¹⁴⁵ In contrast to Stresemann’s judgment, the republican press as well as politicians saw in Stadtler’s inflammatory rhetoric an attempt to provoke a radicalization of socio-political conflicts. On the occasion of a meeting of the newly founded “Union for German Freedom” (*Deutsche*

¹³⁹ After the assassination of Walter Rathenau, the parliament had adopted the “Law for the Protection of the Republic” on July 22, 1922. The law created a legal basis for the prosecution of political crimes.

¹⁴⁰ Heinrich von Gleichen to Martin Spahn, January 29, 1925, BArch, R 118/35

¹⁴¹ Nonetheless, in 1926 Prussia’s Ministry of the Interior was still informed on the special courses of the PK. Report, March 24, 1926. Enclosed in Regierungspräsident Breslau to Minister des Innern, April 6, 1926, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 388.

¹⁴² Carl Severing to Staatsgerichtshof zum Schutze der Republik, July 31, 1922, BArch, R 3009/145 and Staatsgerichtshof zum Schutze der Republik, Beschluss, St. R. 201, August 14, 1922, BArch, R 3009/145.

¹⁴³ Eduard Stadtler, “Erhrliche Politik!” *Tägliche Rundschau*, no. 478 (October 12, 1921), BArch, R 3003/7J264/21.

¹⁴⁴ Dr. Stadtler wegen Landesverrats, 7 J264.21, December 7, 1921, BArch, R 3003/7J264/21, ff. 34-35.

¹⁴⁵ Testimony of Stresemann, November 17, 1921, BArch, R 3003/7J264/21, folio 28.

Freiheitsbund),¹⁴⁶ Stadtler had attacked the government, renewed the appeal to strong men and “national deed,” and allegedly aimed to provoke the left in order to legitimately be able to respond with violence to violence.¹⁴⁷

Personal contrasts and conceptual differences soon disrupted the unity of the circle centered on the “June Club” and the *Politische Kolleg*. The leaders of the “June Club” soon marginalized Eduard Stadtler despite his initial celebrity. Stadtler was not among the editors (Boehm, Gleichen, and Moeller-Bruck) of the young conservatives’ first programmatic volume, *The New Front* (1922), although he contributed to it with one essay.¹⁴⁸ By the end of 1923, in a letter to Spahn, Gleichen commented on the contrasts with Stadtler, who he had invited to “bury his ambition to become a statesman à la Mussolini.”¹⁴⁹ At the same time, the number of Stadtler’s contributions in the *Gewissen* diminished, until he lost the editorship of the young conservatives’ main magazine in December 1925.¹⁵⁰ While Stadtler’s violent rhetoric and focus on the masses had been attractive during the revolutionary upheavals of the immediate aftermath of the war, he lost his appeal with the progressive stabilization of the republican state.

At the same time, the relationship between Spahn and Boehm rapidly worsened. Spahn grew concerned with the increasing independence of Boehm’s “working group,”

¹⁴⁶ Established on September 16, 1922, the *Freiheitsbund*’s goals were the “four freedoms,” namely freedom from the Jewish domination, freedom from the terror in the streets, freedom from parliamentarism, and freedom from Versailles. Der Staatskommissar für öffentliche Ordnung to Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, December 12, 1922, BArch, R 1507/309 and Reichskommissar für die Überwachung der öffentlichen Ordnung, *Lagebericht*, January 6, 1923, BArch, R 1507/2019.

¹⁴⁷ Carl Severing to Bernard Weiß, October 31, 1922, BArch, R 3003/12J1524/22. Further investigations, however, could not confirm the accusations against Stadtler. Bernard Weiß to Carl Severing, November 27, 1922, BArch, R 3003/12J1524/22.

¹⁴⁸ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Heinrich von Gleichen, and Max H. Boehm, eds., *Die Neue Front* (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Paetel, 1922). This point has also been made by Weißmann, “Das ‘Gewissen’ und der ‘Ring,’” in *Konservative Zeitschriften zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur*, 129-130.

¹⁴⁹ Heinrich von Gleichen to Martin Spahn, December 8, 1923, p. 1, BArch, R 118/35. See also Heinrich von Gleichen to Eduard Stadtler, October 7, 1925, pp. 1-2, BArch, R 118/35.

¹⁵⁰ Weißmann, “Das ‘Gewissen’ und der ‘Ring,’” in *Konservative Zeitschriften zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur*, 131.

which the physical distance between the PK and the seat of Boehm's group also symbolized.¹⁵¹ In addition, Boehm's activities and, at times, cooperation with federal agencies contrasted with Spahn's growing involvement with the DNVP, which was pursuing a course of rigid opposition to republican governments.¹⁵² After an acrimonious diatribe, Boehm broke with the PK and established his independent institute, the "Institute of Border and Foreign Studies" (*Institut für Grenz- und Auslandsstudien*).¹⁵³ The contrasts continued because Spahn – who had moved the "working group" on nationalities back to the PK – refused to financially support Boehm's new institute out of the fund that the PK administrated.¹⁵⁴ Upon Hugenberg's insistence, who grew concerned with the duplication of educational efforts,¹⁵⁵ Spahn eventually reached an agreement with the Board of Trustees of Boehm's new institute.¹⁵⁶

The end of the "June Club" was also manifested in the rupture between Spahn and Gleichen. In a special assembly of members, the "June Club" decided to end its activities in April 1924.¹⁵⁷ Consequently, the collaboration between the *Politische Kolleg* and Gleichen's two new endeavors – the "Young Conservative Union" (*Jungkonservative Vereinigung*) and the "German Gentlemen's Club" (*Deutscher Herrenklub*) – loosened.¹⁵⁸ Gleichen developed more elitist forms of societal organization that were rooted in the traditional aristocratic fears of the masses. Referring to the *Herrenklub*,

¹⁵¹ Martin Spahn to Max H. Boehm, September 25, 1925, BArch, R 118/48.

¹⁵² Martin Spahn to Max H. Boehm, September 19, 1925, BArch, R 118/48 and Max H. Boehm to Martin Spahn, September 21, 1925, BArch, R 118/48.

¹⁵³ See the correspondence between Spahn and Boehm in BArch, R 118/48.

¹⁵⁴ Martin Spahn to von Trotha, November 26, 1925, BArch, R 118/48 and Martin Spahn to Szagunn, February 5, 1926, BArch, R 118/48.

¹⁵⁵ Alfred Hugenberg to Martin Spahn, March 4, 1926, BArch, R 118/36 and Alfred Hugenberg to Martin Spahn, April 9, 1926, BArch, R 118/36.

¹⁵⁶ Martin Spahn to Szagunn, April 24, 1926, BArch, R 118/48.

¹⁵⁷ Juni Klub, Circular Letter, April 15, 1924, BArch, R 118/12.

¹⁵⁸ Martin Spahn to Heinrich von Gleichen, November 18, 1924, BArch, R 118/35 and Heinrich von Gleichen to Martin Spahn, November 25, 1924, BArch, R 118/35.

Spahn expressed his concerns with Gleichen's decision to establish a "luxurious and even game club."¹⁵⁹ The estrangement was complete when Stadtler attacked Gleichen's new activities at an event organized by the PK.¹⁶⁰ His break with the "drummer" Stadtler and the "politician" Spahn, as well as his at least partial repudiation of earlier positions on an "idealistic" socialism and a decreasing emphasis on corporatism symbolized the failure of young conservatives' visions for Germany's future.

The "golden years" of the Weimar Republic relegated the *Politische Kolleg* and the "June Club" to a marginal role in the public sphere. Young conservatives' political approach was grounded in the post-war emergency and lost its appeal with the republic's stabilization. Different views on the role of the masses and tensions about the role of political parties in the PK broke the unity of the circle. Eduard Stadtler had been gradually excluded from the "June Club" because of his inability to move beyond the attempts to mobilize the masses. By contrast, Martin Spahn abandoned the group's declared nonpartisanship and became an active member of the DNVP, whereas Heinrich von Gleichen turned to an elitist condemnation of democracy and renewed the call for a capable political leadership. The internal fragmentation of this milieu thus reflected its inability to gain political influence with the normalization of politics.

The rapid fragmentation of the young-conservative circle coincided with the downsizing of the PK, which signaled the gradual disengagement of Spahn's financial supporters. In the summer of 1924, Hugenberg informed Spahn that the group sponsoring the PK would reduce its support and requested a substantial restructuring of the

¹⁵⁹ Martin Spahn to Heinrich von Gleichen, April 14, 1924, BArch, R 118/35.

¹⁶⁰ Heinrich von Gleichen to Martin Spahn, November 11, 1925, BArch, R 118/35 and Martin Spahn to Heinrich von Gleichen, December 4, 1925, BArch, R 118/35.

Politische Kolleg.¹⁶¹ Spahn had to dismiss all his collaborators and could re-hire only some of them on a different basis.¹⁶² By April 1925, the PK comprised only four members, as a result of these personnel reductions.¹⁶³ The rhetoric of young conservatives had been attractive to their political and financial supporters as long as revolution and attempted putsches from the right had rocked the Weimar Republic. The downgrading of the PK activities in the fall of 1924 and the collapse of the “June Club” paralleled the stabilization of the Weimar Republic.

With the stabilization of the Republic and the end of the years of emergency, Gleichen’s elitist message and careful tactical maneuvering appeared more apt to the period than Stadtler’s attempts to mobilize the masses through a nationalized socialism, which had lost its relevance with the end of an imminent Bolshevik threat. At the same time, however, Gleichen maintained the original extra-parliamentary and nonpartisan emphasis against the more traditional political route chosen by Spahn.

Conclusion

Intellectual as well as political elites moved political education to the center of public debates in the aftermath of World War One. Both the formation of capable political leaders and the education of the masses to the requirements of the new democratic institutions prominently figure in the writings of the intellectuals at the center of this study. Nonetheless, political education also contained the promise to reestablish Germany’s international prestige, as the repeated references to the French *École Libre* showed. The writings of Prussia’s Minister of Education, Becker, expressed the general

¹⁶¹ Alfred Hugenberg to Martin Spahn, June 5, 1924, BArch, R 118/36.

¹⁶² E.g., Martin Spahn to Karl Hoffmann, June 25, 1924, GStA Berlin, I. HA, Rep. 303 Nr. 174.

¹⁶³ *Abschrift aus dem Lagebericht vom April 1925*. Enclosed in Regierungspräsident Breslau to Minister des Innern, April 6, 1926, GStA PK, I. HA, Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 388.

hope to restore Germany's unity on a cultural basis, which ambiguously could also include the German minorities living in the territories lost after the Versailles Treaty. Political education had therefore a clear foreign policy function.

Political education also became the tool to transform into reality contrasting forms of societal organization, which were rooted in the common condemnation of national fragmentation and of the reduction of politics to party politics. The communist revolution of the winter of 1918-19 renewed the general appeal to nonpartisanship.

Überparteilichkeit became a nourished ideal that was shared across the political spectrum. The acrimonious debate of the summer of 1920, however, showed that nonpartisanship could have radically contrasting meanings. *Überparteilichkeit* thus not only expressed the general rejection of party politics but also pointed to different understandings of democracy.

The intellectuals of the Jäckh circle saw the major obstacles to the reestablishment of Germany international role in society's fragmentation and political discourse's radicalization. Like Naumann and the Wilhelmine reformers, although against the background of the new republican form of government, these intellectuals argued that only political education – that is, objective and scientific political knowledge able to direct political will and thus constrain ideologies and doctrinism – would allow Germans to cross those ideological, religious, and socio-economic dividing lines that were fragmenting, and thus weakening, Germany.

The appeal to reason and the support of *Überparteilichkeit* and of “chivalrous attitude” in political discussion aimed to de-radicalize the republican public sphere and heal the nation. In their appeals to reason, these *Vernunftrepublikaner* (Republicans of

Reason) entered the public sphere as elders convinced of the need to persuade the youth with the power of rational argumentation over the unreliability of emotions and ideologies. Their understanding of democracy and the concept of *Überparteilichkeit* were two faces of the same coin. By conceptualizing democracy as a “method of government” – with notions of community and leadership as its key elements – the Jäckh circle attempted to win the educated middle classes over to the republic by appealing to both nationalism and reason. In so doing (as Rainer Eisfeld noted), they unconsciously began to narrow the gap between radical and liberal nationalism.¹⁶⁴

The rational approach of the Jäckh circle radically contrasted with the activism of the young conservatives. As Gleichen had repeatedly stressed in the acrimonious debate of the summer of 1920, young conservatives viewed the Jäckh circle as the personification of an old style of politics and as an embodiment of the old generation of cultural and political elites. By contrast, young conservatives presented themselves as a youthful movement that could re-unite Germany under the guidance of a responsible leadership because placed above the political parties. The violent rhetoric of the young conservatives expressed an emphasis on both “action” and “deed” and symbolized a specific form of personal responsibility.

Young conservatives’ political vision (and accordingly their educational policies) was based on the necessity to maintain a high level of (perceived) crisis in German society. A collective political consciousness could emerge only in a context of emergency and crisis, as the key authors of the circle repeatedly stressed. Among the young conservatives, Stadtler had rooted most consistently his call to action in a mobilization of

¹⁶⁴ Rainer Eisfeld, “German Political Science at the Crossroads: The Ambivalent Response to the 1933 Nazi Seizure of Power,” in *Regime Change in 20th Century Germany*, edited by Rainer Eisfeld, Michael Th. Greven, and Hans Karl Rupp (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1996), 18-27.

the masses. Consequentially, as the investigations against him show, his rhetoric was the most violent as he repeatedly aimed to push the masses to action. Young conservatives lost much of the appeal of their message with the gradual stabilization of the republic.

Moeller-Bruck had recognized the necessity to integrate all social segments in the national body and Stadtler had aimed to build a mass-based movement under the leadership of his “Anti-Bolshevik League.” While both had emphasized the problem of leadership and the need to find new leaders above the parties, Gleichen was the most explicit in his suspicion and skepticism of the masses. With the death of Moeller-Bruck and Stadtler’s progressive exclusion from the center of the young conservatives’ circle, Gleichen’s approach proved to be dominant in the second half of the 1920s as the Weimar Republic slowly stabilized.

Notwithstanding violent and, at times, personal attacks, the DHfP and the *Politische Kolleg* maintained at least a minimal form of contact during the first half of the 1920s and would eventually merge in 1926. Interestingly, the attacks mirrored each other and were rooted in the general suspicion towards political parties. Both leaderships accused the other institute of being a school that was closely associated with a specific political party and thus aimed for the indoctrination of public opinion. Paradoxically, these accusations therefore stressed a common understanding of the need of German society. In fact, both institutes stressed the need to provide an “objective” perspective on politics and thus bypass the contentious political fragmentation of German political life. However, while the leadership of the DHfP rooted this approach in an acceptance of socio-political differences, the leaders of the PK emphasized notions of unity and homogeneity.

The gradual stabilization of the Weimar Republic influenced the development of these two educational experiments. As I will describe in the following chapters, Jäckh and his associates celebrated the normalization of political society as a success of their rational approach to politics. Emblematically, the stabilization of Germany's first democracy paralleled the consolidation of the German School of Politics. Supported during the first half of the 1920s by wealthy philanthropists, Jäckh established a notable institute that took over the ambitious task of education Germans to a pluralistic conception of democracy. Conversely, the Political College was swiftly relegated to a marginal role in Germany's public sphere, as the activist rhetoric of the young conservatives appeared inadequate to the new political context.

CHAPTER 5: THE *DEUTSCHE HOCHSCHULE FÜR POLITIK*, INTERNATIONALISM, AND AMERICAN PHILANTHROPY

In the interwar period, American philanthropic foundations complemented the isolationist foreign policy of the U.S. government, thus becoming crucial actors in a semi-official cultural diplomacy. The leadership of these foundations viewed internationalism as a state of mind that had grown out of the practical recognition that the United States was part of a complex economic and political network that spanned across national boundaries. While these foundations' international programs were thus grounded in the awareness of industrial societies' transnational interconnectedness, they were nonetheless rooted in the conviction that the American balance between individualist tendencies and commitment to the common good represented the roadmap for all modern democracies. American ideals of democracy and public values therefore undergird U.S. international philanthropy, as international philanthropy represented a projection of values and institutional models abroad.

Polity's dramatic expansion had altered the socio-political equilibrium of industrialized societies at the turn of the nineteenth century. In Germany, socio-moral milieus and their associational networks had fragmented society. The tensions between conservative political institutions and the political pressures of a mobilized working class had provided the background for the emergence of a reformist movement that viewed objective research as the solution to societal fragmentation. Also in the United States, voluntary associations appeared to fragment society along religious and ethnic lines.¹ Mass membership organizations typified American society's basic tension between traditional patterns of localism and broader, nation-wide social as well as political

¹ Jason Kaufman, *For the Common Good? American Civic Life and the Golden Age of Fraternity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

movements.² The faith of American reformists in scientific solutions to social ills thus developed against the background of the construction of a national political culture and the search for an effective political leadership in a mass democracy.

World War One radically transformed American society. Like German reformers, American progressives had also hoped that the war would tighten social bonds and hence bridge the tension between individual rights and national needs.³ The war, however, hardened domestic conflicts and forced various social groups to redefine their identities and roles.⁴ The total war signaled the passage from a voluntaristic society to an industrialized one, as mobilization intensified the cooperation between business, philanthropy, and government.⁵ In this context, modern philanthropic foundations were strategically placed at the intersection of public and private action. Although they were relatively new actors in American society, philanthropic foundations would soon provide the institutional link between academic theory and practical implementation that was missing in Germany.

Rockefeller philanthropic institutions and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) became major financial supporters of the DHfP in the second half of the 1920s. The grants from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRM) and, later, from the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) supported the development of research programs at the DHfP in the belief – which was at the core of scientific philanthropy –

² Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy. From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 2004), 78-89.

³ David Kennedy, *Over here: The First World War and American society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 41-49.

⁴ Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam wants you: World War I and the making of the modern American citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁵ Peter Dobkin Hall, “A Historical Overview of Philanthropy, Voluntary Associations, and Nonprofit Organizations in the United States, 1600-2000,” in *The Nonprofit Sector. A Research Handbook*, 2nd ed., edited by Richard Steinberg and Walter W. Powell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 49-50.

that “objective” research could de-radicalize contentious social and political issues. These grants contributed to the gradual transformation of the DHfP from an institute devoted to practical and vocational training to a research center with a specific focus on foreign affairs. Conversely, the CEIP supported the internationalization of the DHfP in the conviction that the creation of an international, cross-border network of scholars and research centers could counter the climate of suspicion among European elites that CEIP officers believed had caused World War One.

The relationship between the DHfP and American philanthropic institutions developed around a clear asymmetry. Ernst Jäckh and his associates were successful in securing grants from American philanthropic institutions, notwithstanding the School’s original focus on teaching. Ultimately, American financial support contributed to the development of research programs and, conversely, to the marginalization of civic education. This transformation points to the School’s need to adapt to the interests of its financial supporters. While research on the crucial role of foundation officers in mediating between grantors and grantees in foundations’ early phase relativizes Foucaultian interpretations, it cannot be underemphasized that the School’s progressive turn toward research was contingent on the need for financial support. Consciously, the School’s leadership would develop its research and academic programs. During the final phase of the DHfP, political education would be almost completely relegated to the “Civics Seminar,” one of the special seminars organized at the DHfP. In the early 1930s, both conservative faculty members of the DHfP and conservative media would increasingly attack this seminar and its director, as it was the only program that still explicitly aimed at strengthening Germany’s weakening democratic state.

At the same time, the emphasis by U.S. foundations on internationalization was not fully aware of the nationalist function of internationalism in inter-war Europe. In the first half of the twentieth century, scientific internationalism was based on the idea of acknowledging national scientific accomplishments by measuring them by international standards, a practice that scholars have aptly defined as “Olympic internationalism.”⁶ “Science as a power substitute” was, therefore, implicit in the notion of internationalism, and in the aftermath of Germany’s military defeat and revolution the emphasis shifted from a passive to an active *Kulturpolitik*.⁷ In fact, in the inter-war period, as Giuliana Gemelli suggested, “scientific cooperation ... [did] not mean necessarily scientific integration” because “asymmetries” developed between American and European institutions, as well as among the European participants in these networks.⁸

The scientific internationalism supported by American philanthropic foundations did not reflect the goals of the internationalism of the School’s leadership. The new centrality of international relations was part of the desire to reestablish Germany’s international role by revising the Versailles Treaty, which from a traditional Naumannian perspective appeared possible with the stabilization of republican institutions. Emblematically, the leadership of the DHfP adapted their domestic strategies to foreign policy goals. Just as at the individual level they were the foundational blocks for the development of a German civil society, personal contacts, knowledge, and willingness to compromise were also described as the roots of peaceful relationships among sovereign

⁶ Geert J. Somsen, “A History of Universalism: Conceptions of the Internationality of Science from the Enlightenment to the Cold War,” *Minerva*, vol. 46 (2008), 361-379.

⁷ Paul Forman, “Scientific Internationalism and the Weimar Physicists: The Ideology and Its Manipulation in Germany after World War I,” *Isis*, vol. 64, no. 2 (1973), 157-168.

⁸ Giuliana Gemelli, “Europe-U.S.A. American Foundations and European Scientific Integration: Actors and Networks (1920’s-70’s),” *MEFRIM*, vol. 114, no. 1 (2002), 412-413.

states. This new internationalism was thus grounded in mutual understanding, personal exchanges, and international historical and geographical entanglements, yet its ultimate objective was the reestablishment of Germany's international status.

This asymmetric relationship between grantor and grantee points to the crucial role of foundation officers as well as of other individual actors. Foundation officers and local representatives played an important role in mediating between interests that often overlapped, but not infrequently contrasted. In line with Volker Berghahn's work on Shepard Stone and the Ford Foundation, Giuliana Gemelli and Roy MacLeod have pointed out that foundation officers operated "on the borders of continents, cultures, and disciplines" and acted as "bridge-builder" between "people, cultures, and disciplines."⁹ Hence, they suggest the fruitfulness for researchers to analyze the (at times) relative freedom of maneuver of officers in negotiating the asymmetries between grantors and grantees.

Accordingly, I first discuss the emergence of scientific philanthropy in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century and point to the similarities between the approaches of the leadership of the DHfP and those of U.S. foundations. Secondly, through the prism of the CEIP, I detail the emergence of a basic asymmetry between the internationalism of U.S. foundations and the nationalist internationalism of the DHfP. Jäckh and his associates viewed the cooperation with American foundations and with other international organizations as a tool to break Germany's international isolation, reestablish its role in world affairs, and pursue the revision of the Versailles Treaty. Lastly, I detail the paradoxical effects of American financial support to the DHfP through

⁹ Giuliana Gemelli and Roy MacLeod, "Introduction," *Minerva*, vol. 41 (2003), 96-97 and 98. See Volker Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy and Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

the analysis of the relationship between the School and Rockefeller institutions. The research-oriented grants from Rockefeller institutions gradually moved the DHfP away from its original focus on vocational training, thus supporting the development of research in international affairs that eventually favored the integration of conservative elites into the School.

American Scientific Philanthropy, Internationalism, and Germany

In Germany, the new figure of the public intellectual aimed to gain a certain level of political influence by mediating between political leaders, economic elites, and “masses.” The relevance of the DHfP lied exactly in its leadership’s ability to effectively connect the worlds of academic theory and political practice. American reformers – like their German counterparts – struggled in coming to terms with industrialized society’s technological requirements and need for expertise, as well as with the pressures arising from political society’s massification. The rapid emergence of a cultural, economic, and political system that crossed regional and national borders threatened well-established patterns of localism and America’s nourished weak state tradition. In this peculiar context, American philanthropists viewed the modern philanthropic foundation as the best institutional form to address the socio-political challenges of the times. Philanthropic foundations thus developed as crucial in-between institutions that connected the world of academic research and the sphere of (socio-political) action.

The transition from charity to philanthropy symbolized the shift from an emotional and religious act of piety to scientific approaches to social problems. Charity, which was regarded as an immediate and inefficient alleviation of social ills, paved the path to scientific philanthropic interventions that aimed to address the roots of social

problems.¹⁰ At the turn of the century, scientific philanthropy developed in reaction to both the awareness of religious charity's limits and the need for social reforms with a national scope.¹¹ This development expressed the need for institutions that were able to connect actions and ideas.¹² In other words, scientific philanthropy addressed the training of elites and experts who could "run a modern democracy effectively."¹³

Modern philanthropic foundations epitomized the transition from charity to philanthropy. Foundations soon formed a "national system of social reform" that operated privately in place of the government,¹⁴ and addressed industrial society's problems by focusing on the training of leadership.¹⁵ Foundations explicitly aimed to influence social, economic, and political life by substituting partisan politics with policy processes, which would rely on a network of academic experts, professional bodies, business, and government.¹⁶ In the peculiar American context, therefore, philanthropic foundations, with their intrinsic celebration of private initiative, provided the possibility to hide the necessity for a strong federal government by maintaining a nominal distinction between private action and public sphere.¹⁷

¹⁰ Robert A. Gross, "Giving in America: From Charity to Philanthropy," in *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History*, edited by Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 29-48 and Judith Sealander, "Curing Evils at their Source: The Arrival of Scientific Giving," in *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History*, edited by Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 217-239. Anheier and Hammack, however, point to the discrepancy between the legal meaning of charity and its use in a non-legal context. David C. Hammack and Helmut K. Anheier, *A Versatile Institution. The Changing Ideals and Realities of Philanthropic Foundations* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 5-9.

¹¹ Karl and Katz, "The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890-1930," 237.

¹² Karl, "Philanthropy and the Maintenance of Democratic Elites," 217.

¹³ Karl, "Philanthropy and the Maintenance of Democratic Elites," 211.

¹⁴ Karl and Katz, "The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890-1930," 242-243.

¹⁵ Karl, "Philanthropy and the Maintenance of Democratic Elites," 211.

¹⁶ Hall, "A Historical Overview of Philanthropy, Voluntary Associations, and Nonprofit Organizations in the United States, 1600-2000," in *The Nonprofit Sector*, 47.

¹⁷ Karl and Katz, "The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890-1930," 259-260.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, therefore, “general-purpose foundations” became central actors in the political, cultural, and socio-economic life of the United States.¹⁸ They were the midpoint of a peculiar American “institutional matrix” because they linked academic theory, the empiric investigations spurred by these theories, and the policy processes based on the resulting findings.¹⁹ In the first third of the century, foundations thus contributed to the creation of a “culture of experts,” although many of their programs failed to influence public policy.²⁰ Philanthropists aimed to solve socio-political problems through objective research, which averted partisanship by developing an apolitical professional class that could govern a modern, democratic society. In so doing, on a basic level, their approach paralleled the one of the circle that had formed around Ernst Jäckh and the German School of Politics.

Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, Sr. personified the shift to scientific approaches to philanthropy. Carnegie had condemned “indiscriminate charity” already in 1889, and thus set the rules for scientific philanthropy.²¹ Likewise, by the 1880s, Rockefeller, Sr. had developed a business-like approach to philanthropy that preferred wholesale giving to small, uncoordinated gifts, and which was based on experts’ advice.²² Industrialists like Carnegie and Rockefeller, Sr. hence transferred rules and organizational models that had made their businesses successful to their foundations. In

¹⁸ David C. Hammack, “Foundations in the American Polity,” in *Philanthropic Foundations: New Scholarship, New Possibilities*, edited by Ellen C. Lagemann (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 43-68.

¹⁹ Olivier Zunz, *Why the American Century?* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 33.

²⁰ Judith Sealander, *Private Wealth and Public Life: Foundation Philanthropy and the Reshaping of American Social Policy from the Progressive Era to the New Deal* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 243.

²¹ Andrew Carnegie, “Wealth” (1889), reprinted in *The North American Review*, vol. 266, no. 3 (1981), 60-64.

²² Ron Chernow, *Titan. The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004 [1998]), 237-242.

particular, with their philanthropies, both developed links between philanthropic organizations, researchers, and social reforms and government.²³ As a result, they influenced the form of the modern philanthropic foundation.²⁴

The CEIP and the RF were – during the interwar years – the only American foundations with an explicitly international orientation. Furthermore, both were committed – the CEIP directly and, more indirectly, the RF – to the promotion of international peace. The CEIP was characterized by an elitist, legalistic, and conservative effort to support peace by creating an international community of scholars. Conversely, the strategy of the RF was based on a characteristic American belief that economic liberalism, political pluralism, and scientific empirism were the *conditio sine qua non* of the world's peaceful evolution.²⁵ These philanthropic institutions thus institutionalized a (largely private) system for the conduct of international cultural relations and, in so doing, symbolized the opposition of American cultural and political elites to a strong federal government.²⁶

After World War One, foundations exported abroad their scientific approaches, in a development that paralleled America's growing isolationism. The original distance between diplomacy and philanthropy had been rooted in the separation of state and church, which meant that public relief operated separately from, and independently of,

²³ Karl and Katz, "The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890–1930," 248.

²⁴ Kenneth Prewitt, "Foundations," in *The Nonprofit Sector. A Research Handbook*, 2nd edition, edited by Walter W. Powell and Richard Steinberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 361.

²⁵ Malcolm Richardson, "The Humanities and International Understanding: Some Reflections on the Experience of the Rockefeller Foundation," in *Philanthropy and Culture. The International Foundation Perspective*, edited by Kathleen D. McCarthy (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 25–41.

²⁶ Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938–1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), chapter 1. See also Steven Heydemann and Rebecca Kinsey, "The State and International Philanthropy: The Contribution of American Foundations, 1919–1991," in *American Foundations: Roles and Contributions*, edited by Helmut K. Anheier and David C. Hammack (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2010), 205–236.

religious charity. Consequently, the emergence of secular, scientific philanthropic institutions narrowed the gap between official foreign policy and private initiatives,²⁷ although private-level encounters had always co-existed with state-to-state interactions.²⁸ The Great War accelerated the shift from relief to more strategic interventions, in particular in public health.²⁹ Philanthropic foundations thus became major actors in “spreading the American dream” abroad,³⁰ as well as in a semi-official cultural diplomacy.³¹ During the first decades of the twentieth century, foundations were at the center of “philanthropic projection of institutional logics abroad,”³² and acted as transatlantic bridges.³³ The Weimar Republic soon became one of the major testing-grounds for the approaches of American foundations.

This projection of American presence across the Atlantic was not simply a unidirectional process but also responded to the increasing fascination of European elites with American culture and business practices.³⁴ Since the constitutional debates in the spring of 1919, the United States had become a point of reference for German liberals who were seeking models for forms of societal organization that were able to guarantee

²⁷ Volker R. Berghahn, “Philanthropy and Diplomacy in the ‘American Century,’” *Diplomatic History*, vol. 23, no. 3 (1999), 396.

²⁸ Akira Iriye, “International Organizations and the Making of the International Community,” in *Globalization, Philanthropy, and Civil Society: Projecting Institutional Logics Abroad*, edited by Steven Heydemann and David C. Hammack (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 32-43.

²⁹ Paul Weindling, “Philanthropy and the World Health: The Rockefeller Foundation and the League of Nations Health Organization,” *Minerva*, vol. 35 (1997), 269-281, Paul Weindling, “Public health and political stabilization: The Rockefeller Foundation in Central and Eastern Europe between the two world wars,” *Minerva*, vol. 31 (1993), 253-267, and William H. Schneider, ed., *Rockefeller Philanthropy and Modern Biomedicine* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

³⁰ Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).

³¹ Katharina Rietzler, “Before the Cultural Cold Wars: American philanthropy and cultural diplomacy in the inter-war years,” *Historical Research*, vol. 84, no. 223 (2011), 148-164.

³² Steven Heydemann and David C. Hammack, “Philanthropic Projections: *Sending Institutional Logics Abroad*,” in *Globalization, Philanthropy, and Civil Society: Projecting Institutional Logics Abroad*, edited by Steven Heydemann and David C. Hammack (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 3-31.

³³ See in particular Gemelli and MacLeod, eds., *American Foundations in Europe*.

³⁴ See Nolan, *Visions of Modernity* and Maier, *In Search of Stability*.

levels of individual liberty while strengthening the national bonds of Germany's fragmented society.³⁵ Interestingly, while Ernst Troeltsch characterized the growing influence of German economic elites in political decision-making as a dangerous "Americanization," Arnold Wolfers praised the U.S. economic system's alleged ability to contain class struggles.³⁶ Furthermore, by analyzing political education in the United States, Wolfers pointed out the importance of debates and discussions in fostering "a lively inner participation of all and a sense of co-responsibility,"³⁷ hence implicitly establishing a parallel to the DHfP. Implicitly, therefore, both positive and negative references to "America" primarily had a domestic function.

The DHfP and scientific philanthropy emerged from common concerns with the tensions between the requirements of a technological, industrial society and the demands of mass democracy. The paths of American scientific philanthropy and the DHfP therefore quite naturally crossed. Nonetheless, the relationship between U.S. foundations and the leadership of the DHfP soon developed around a basic asymmetry between the American ideals of science and democracy and the realities of Germany's political culture and democratic institutions.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the "International Mind"

Founded in 1910, the CEIP embodied the scientific approach of a new generation of philanthropists. In fact, while in the words of Andrew Carnegie the CEIP was committed "to hasten the abolition of international war, the foulest blot upon our

³⁵ During the constitutional debates, Friedrich Meinecke explicitly referred to the American presidency as a model. Meinecke, "Verfassung und Verwaltung der deutschen Republik," 1-16.

³⁶ Troeltsch, *Spektator-Briefe*, 240-243 and Arnold Wolfers, "Amerikanische Demokratie. Versuch einer Positiven Würdigung," *Blätter für religiösen Sozialismus*, vol. 6 (1925), 1-17.

³⁷ Arnold Wolfers, "Betrachtungen zur politischen Erziehung in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika," *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 3, issue 5 (1926), 61.

civilization,”³⁸ its leadership aimed to counter the “bodies of enthusiasts” that were “decrying war” and circulating “the more emotional type of pacifist literature.”³⁹

Therefore, although it provided a previously unknown financial support and prestige to the peace cause, well-known peace activists of the time criticized the CEIP because of its conservative philosophy.⁴⁰ The Endowment exemplified the American peace movement’s shift to the practical approach of businessmen and academicians who conjugated the conviction in the link between prosperity and peace, America’s perceived superiority, and the distrust for the European balance of power in a new, elitist pacifism.⁴¹

Nicholas M. Butler was an instrumental figure in the establishment of the Endowment, of which he became president in 1925 after having directed its Division of Intercourse and Education. In 1909 he had proposed the establishment of an international peace trust, which Carnegie had, however, initially rejected.⁴² He primarily was an organizer and educator and, as its president since 1902, he contributed to the transformation of Columbia University into a leading educational institution. He also advocated for the professionalization of administration and teaching in his role as both president of the New York-based Industrial Education Association and editor of the

³⁸ Andrew Carnegie, “Mr. Carnegie’s Letter to the Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for the Advancement of Peace and Resolutions Adopted by the Trustees,” *International Conciliation*, vol. 1, (1907-1911).

³⁹ Nicholas M. Butler, “The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace” (November 27, 1913), *International Conciliation*, vol. 75 (1914), 3-4.

⁴⁰ Merle Curti, *Peace or War. The American Struggle, 1636-1936* (Boston: J. S. Canner & Company, 1959), 205-206. The founding of the Church Peace Union (1914) may suggest that Carnegie himself was not entirely happy with the policies of the Endowment, but refused as a principle to impose his vision on the governing body. David S. Patterson, “Andrew Carnegie’s Quest for World Peace,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 114, no. 5 (1970), 371-383 and David Nasaw, *Andrew Carnegie* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 776.

⁴¹ Charles F. Howlett, “Nicholas Murray Butler’s Crusade for a Warless World,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. 67, no. 2 (Winter, 1983-1984), 101. In October 1914, Butler described the World War One as the result of the European political system, made of “alliances and ententes,” and characterized by “the balance of power theory.” Nicholas M. Butler, “The Great War and Its Lessons,” *International Conciliation*, Special Bulletin (October, 1914), 3-14.

⁴² Nasaw, *Andrew Carnegie*, 716-717.

Educational Review. Legitimately, therefore, a *New York Times* correspondent could assert that Butler united “in a rare degree, the qualities of the student, the educator, and the statesman.”⁴³ He was therefore a public figure strategically placed at the intersection between academia and politics.

Butler made public the plans of the CEIP at the opening address of the seventeenth Lake Mohonk Conference. He defined the CEIP as a “great institution for research and public education” addressing “the juristic, the economic, and, broadly speaking, the educational aspects of the problem.”⁴⁴ Indeed, the Trustees had organized the work of the Endowment in three broad divisions. The “Division of Economics and History” primarily focused on the study of the effects of wars on men, whereas the “Division of International Law” analyzed existing legal principles and investigated the role of international law and international tribunals in solving international conflicts. Finally, Butler himself directed the “Division of Intercourse and Education,” which was the most clearly internationally-oriented and was devoted to educational efforts aimed to foster international friendship, tolerance, and hospitality.⁴⁵

In the years surrounding World War One, the attitude of the leadership of the CEIP towards Germany was erratic. It moved from open sympathies and unrealistic hopes in Germany’s political leadership to – by ways of hostility and enmity during the war – a sense of responsibility for Europe’s reconstruction. Before the war, Carnegie and Butler had repeatedly stressed the pacifist intentions of the German state and, in

⁴³ *New York Times*, “Dr. Butler at Mohonk,” May 26, 1911.

⁴⁴ *New York Times*, “Peacemakers’ Plan to Use \$10,000,000,” May 25, 1911.

⁴⁵ Amy Heminway Jones, “Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Organization and Work,” *International Conciliation*, no. 200 (July 1924), 202-242.

particular, of Kaiser Wilhelm II.⁴⁶ After the outbreak of the war, the Trustees issued a statement to be published in several morning papers that asserted that the war was “teaching the gospel of peace” by demonstrating once again the “universal interdependence of nations” and discrediting “old paths of policy and suspicion.”⁴⁷ Butler reaffirmed the commitment to internationalism by stressing American responsibilities “to bind up the war’s wounds, to soften the war’s animosities, and to lead the way in the colossal work of reconstruction.”⁴⁸ Nonetheless, while initially the CEIP sustained a course of strict neutrality, over the years it clearly endorsed the war against Germany as a war for democracy.⁴⁹

In the aftermath of World War One, the CEIP approached the new situation in Europe with the conviction that the traditional approach of governments could not solve the new world’s problems. The 1915 CEIP Yearbook had already pointed to the necessity “to devise and to put in operation new plans for the great and doubtless long task of reconstruction which must be entered upon just as soon as the present work of destruction comes to an end.”⁵⁰ During a Board Meeting in December 1920, Elihu Root (the president of the CEIP) reaffirmed the Endowment’s commitment to internationalism and the necessity to complement the work of governments.

⁴⁶ See for instance Andrew Carnegie, “Kaiser Wilhelm II, Peacemaker,” *New York Times*, June 8, 1913, *New York Times*, “Forced on Kaiser, Says Carnegie,” September 26, 1914, *New York Times*, “Kaiser Pays Honor to Dr. N. M. Butler,” October 16, 1910, and Nicholas Murray Butler, “The International Mind. Opening Address at the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, May 15, 1912,” *International Conciliation* 55 (June, 1912), 3-14.

⁴⁷ *Statement of the Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 17, 1915, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) Records, Series VIII, Box 342, Folder 4, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (hereafter designed as RBML).

⁴⁸ Butler, “The Great War and Its Lessons,” 8.

⁴⁹ *New York Times*, “Butler Says War Aim is to Punish Germany,” February 3, 1918. See also Howlett, “Nicholas Murray Butler’s Crusade for a Warless World,” 107-108.

⁵⁰ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Year Book 1915* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1915), 55-56.

We are impressed by the inadequacy of everything that is being attempted, the League of Nations, Supreme Council, peace organizations, – the inadequacy of it all is the great fact that we have to deal with ... We are beating around on the mere surface of things, and by ‘we’ I do not mean this organization; I mean governments. What has been done hitherto is a mere attempt to bind the giant with silk ribbons.⁵¹

These comments and the involvement of philanthropic foundations in European relief testify to the international consciousness of the leadership of these philanthropic institutions, and point to the readiness to complement official American foreign policy’s isolationism.

The international activities of the CEIP were rooted in the awareness that the United States was part of an interconnected world system. Butler gave resonance to the term “internationalism” during his presidency of the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration in 1907 and 1909-1912. He complained about the lack of interest in the United States for foreign affairs and stressed the need to develop such an international consciousness. He called for the development of an “international mind,” which he defined as

nothing else than that habit of thinking of foreign relations and business, and that habit of dealing with them, which regards the several nations of the civilized world as free and co-operating equals in aiding the progress of civilization, in developing commerce and industry, and in spreading enlightenment and culture throughout the world.⁵²

By pointing to the international interconnections that characterize modern societies, the “international mind” was a mindset rooted in the capacity to understand other people and

⁵¹ *Problems confronting the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Statements by Elihu Root and Nicholas Murray Butler, reprinted from the Minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees, December 7, 1920, p. 14, CEIP Records, Series VIII, Box 342, Folder 1, RBML.

⁵² Nicholas M. Butler, “The International Mind: How to Develop It,” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York*, vol. 7, no. 2 (1917), 17.

to adopt their point of view. In fact, he was careful in stressing that it was a mindset that was not identical with the idea of superiority of one state over others.⁵³

In support of the development of the “International Mind,” Butler organized a European Bureau of the Division of Intercourse and Education. The Division established a Bureau in Paris under the presidency of Baron d’Estournelles de Constant, who was supported by an Advisory Council comprising of distinguished European statesmen and publicists. This Bureau aimed to make the work of the Division “truly international” and to counter critics who described the CEIP as “a purely American undertaking[,] which aimed to instruct and influence the opinion of Europe from outside.”⁵⁴ The work of the Bureau consisted of “the general education of public opinion” and aimed to encourage “a spirit of real international understanding.”⁵⁵ After the death of Baron d’Estournelles de Constant in 1924, the leadership of the Division reorganized the European Bureau, which came under closer supervision of the New York City office.⁵⁶ To this end, the Executive Committee of the CEIP appointed Earle B. Babcock as the Assistant to the Director of the Division of Intercourse and Education to be assigned to the European Bureau.⁵⁷

Butler was particularly conscious of the political dimension of the work of philanthropic institutions. By the end of the war, Butler stressed the challenges for a “voluntary association” like the CEIP to approach public debates when “sharp differences

⁵³ Butler, “The International Mind: How to Develop It,” 18.

⁵⁴ Jones, “Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Organization and Work,” 40-41.

⁵⁵ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Year Book 1921* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1921), 53.

⁵⁶ Memorandum dictated by Nicholas M. Butler, April 9, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 106, Folder 5, RBML. See also M. Th. Ruyssen to Nicholas M. Butler, March 9, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 106, Folder 5, RBML.

⁵⁷ Henry H. Haskell to Earle B. Babcock, April 20, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 106, Folder 5, RBML.

of opinion” develop between, and within, nations.⁵⁸ Thus, the European Bureau and Butler relied on Special Correspondents in foreign countries. These trusted persons reported monthly on “significant events in their respective countries,” as well as on “the movement of public opinion regarding these events.”⁵⁹ For Germany, the CEIP relied on two well-known pacifists, Hellmut von Gerlach and Friedrich W. Foerster.⁶⁰ The relationship between the CEIP and its two German correspondents epitomized the problematic approach of American philanthropy to Germany’s contentious public sphere. In this context, the development of the cooperation between the CEIP and the DHfP does not only reveal the asymmetry that existed between two different approaches to internationalism but also points to the Endowment’s difficulties in identifying partners in Germany who were, at the same time, politically reliable and effective.

The case of Friedrich W. Foerster symbolized the political tensions surrounding the work of the CEIP in Germany and pointed to the intrinsic nationalism of Jäckh and his associates. The Executive Committee of the CEIP nominated Foerster as the Special Correspondent of the Division of Intercourse and Education in April 1923.⁶¹ However, while describing Foerster as Germany’s critical conscience, the 1924 CEIP Yearbook

⁵⁸ *Problems confronting the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Statements by Elihu Root and Nicholas Murray Butler, reprinted from the Minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees, December 7, 1920, p. 8, CEIP Records, Series VIII, Box 342, Folder 1, RBML.

⁵⁹ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Year Book 1920* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1921), 46.

⁶⁰ Friedrich W. Foerster was an academic whose pacifism had exposed him to attacks from conservative and nationalist circles. During World War One, he was suspended for two semesters from the University of Munich because of his anti-militaristic stand. In the following five decades, until his death in 1966, he would denounce the militarism and Prussianism of Germany’s political elites. Hellmut von Gerlach was a politician and journalist who had been close to the Friedrich Naumann circle since the 1890s. He had been a member of the National Social Association, and at the end of World War One had co-founded with Naumann the DDP. During the Weimar Republic he was involved in several pacifist organizations including the International Peace Bureau and the German Human Rights League, and aimed to counter the spread of monarchic and nationalist feelings in German society. He died in exile in Paris in 1935.

⁶¹ Henry S. Haskell to Friedrich W. Foerster, April 24, 1923, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

also included Butler's warning against "an excess of zeal which would be interpreted by any government or by the public as an interference by private initiative with public policy."⁶² In fact, Foerster was a highly controversial public figure in Germany. He had denounced the militarism of Germany's political elites already during World War One,⁶³ and in the aftermath of the war he published a pamphlet emblematically titled *My Struggle against the Militaristic and Nationalistic Germany*,⁶⁴ which forced him to seek refuge in Switzerland after receiving numerous death threats from right-wing circles.⁶⁵

While Gerlach primarily reported on political developments such as government formations and crises, as well as foreign policy, Foerster discussed in much more detail societal dynamics. Both correspondents, however, repeatedly denounced Germany's secret rearmament in violation of the provisions of the Versailles Treaty.⁶⁶ The CEIP was, however, eager to relativize these developments and seemed worried with its special correspondents' excessive criticism.⁶⁷ At least initially, both Foerster and Gerlach had viewed the nationalist parties' electoral successes as a sign of a growing sense of political responsibility of Germany's political class.⁶⁸ Paul von Hindenburg's election to Reich

⁶² Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Year Book 1924* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924), 62-63.

⁶³ Friedrich W. Foerster, "A Voice from Germany: Why German Peace Declarations Fail to Convince," *International Conciliation*, no. 129 (August, 1918), 447-461. This article was first published in the *Münchener Post* (January 4, 1918).

⁶⁴ Friedrich W. Foerster, *Mein Kampf gegen das militaristische und nationalistische Deutschland. Gesichtspunkte zur deutschen Selbsterkenntnis und zum Aufbau eines neuen Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Verlag "Friede durchrecht," 1920).

⁶⁵ Friedrich W. Foerster, *Erlebte Weltgeschichte, 1869-1953. Memoiren* (Nürnberg: Glock und Lutz, 1953), 279-280 and 284-288.

⁶⁶ See for example Friedrich W. Foerster to Mr. Sander, April 1, 1924, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML and Hellmut von Gerlach, *December 1924 Report*, January 14, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 123, Folder 1, RBML.

⁶⁷ Henry S. Haskell to Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, January 16, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML and Henry S. Haskell to Hellmut von Gerlach, January 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 123, Folder 1, RBML.

⁶⁸ See for example Friedrich W. Foerster, *Report on the Situation in Germany*, October 24, 1924, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

President in April 1925 appeared, however, to both as a wakeup call. Although Foerster saw in the election's result an event that could force conservative elites to take political responsibility, he defined it as the "triumph of Prussian nationalism and militarism."⁶⁹

Foerster's reports rapidly became more pessimistic. He described the existence of two Germanys, one democratic and the other under the yoke of Prussian militarism. He warned that in Germany,

civil society itself was built upon the discipline and the spirit of the army, all civil and professional relations and all the methods of discipline and education being penetrated by the military mentality. Therefore it must be understood that the freeing of the people from those traditions and the replacement of their disciplinary power by other binding forms and methods is naturally to be a very slow process[.]⁷⁰

Foerster thus stressed the militant nature of Germany's civil society and pointed to the weakness of its democratic elements. Accordingly, he grew concerned with what he viewed as the international community's passive approach to German rearmament and advocated for an energetic, anti-armament policy by the Allied Powers.⁷¹ Consequently, he encouraged Butler to convince President Calvin Coolidge to issue a statement of condemnation of Germany's violations of the Versailles Treaty.⁷²

Against the background of its Special Correspondents' growing pessimism, the Division of Intercourse and Education sought more moderate voices in Germany. At a

⁶⁹ Friedrich W. Foerster, *Report on the Situation in Germany*, May 16, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML. Quotation on page 2. Interestingly, Gerlach viewed Hindenburg's victory as a sign of Germany's fragmentation into political and religious camps, as well as a result of the impact on politics of politically un-educated women. Hellmut von Gerlach, *April 1925 Report*, May 3, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 123, Folder 1, RBML.

⁷⁰ Friedrich W. Foerster, *Report on the Situation in Germany*, December 29, 1924, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

⁷¹ Friedrich W. Foerster, *Report on the Situation in Germany*, March 1, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

⁷² Friedrich W. Foerster to Henry S. Haskell, January 17, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

time when Foerster and Gerlach grew concerned with the militarism of Germany's political elites, Jäckh celebrated the growing sense of political responsibility of Germans and elevated President von Hindenburg to a symbol of the "New Germany."⁷³ In lecture tours organized by the CEIP,⁷⁴ Jäckh criss-crossed the United States in 1925 and 1926, successfully raising the interest of the American public for the "New Germany."⁷⁵ During these first tours and in a meeting with President Coolidge,⁷⁶ Jäckh reported on his efforts to educate Germany's new political leadership, described the crucial role of the DHfP, and discussed efforts to deepen the mutual understanding between Germany and United States.⁷⁷ The Assistant Director of the Division of Intercourse and Education, Henry S. Haskell reported to Foerster and Gerlach on the positive impression of Jäckh and his lectures.⁷⁸ At the same time, Haskell and Butler asked Babcock to explore the possibilities of cooperating with the DHfP.⁷⁹

Almost inevitably, the development of the relationship between the CEIP and the DHfP led to the rapture between the Division of Intercourse and Education and its two German correspondents. In fact, the protests of Foerster, who had denounced the

⁷³ *Indianapolis News*, "Modern Germans are thinking individually, Dr. Jackh asserts," March 13, 1926, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 13, Scrapbook 24, pt. 1, RBML.

⁷⁴ Henry S. Haskett to Ernst Jäckh, January 6, 1926, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML and Henry S. Haskett to Ernst Jäckh, February 24, 1926, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML.

⁷⁵ See Arnold Bennet Hall to Amy Heminway Jones, March 8, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 4, RBML and *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Deutsche Gelehrte in Amerika," March 23, 1926, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 12, Scrapbook 22, RBML.

⁷⁶ *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Professor Jäckh bei Coolidge," February 16, 1926, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 12, Scrapbook 22, RBML.

⁷⁷ Arthur Evans, "Urges Exchange of Leaders to Study Politics," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 8, 1926, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 13, Scrapbook 24, pt. 1, RBML.

⁷⁸ Henry S. Haskell to Friedrich W. Foerster, April 20, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML and Henry S. Haskell to Hellmut von Gerlach, December 16, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 123, Folder 1, RBML.

⁷⁹ Haskell to Earle B. Babcock, December 21, 1925, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 2, RBML and Earle B. Babcock to Haskell, January 15, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 3, RBML.

nationalism of German democratic circles,⁸⁰ confirmed in the eyes of Butler, Haskell, and Babcock the need to seek out new contact persons in Germany. In March 1926, Babcock described the DHfP as “an opportunity ... to do something for Germany which will be of the first importance,”⁸¹ and a few days later, during a meeting of the Advisory Council of the European Bureau, Erich von Prittwitz und Gaffron (German delegate of the Advisory Council and brother of the German Ambassador to the United States) advocated for the cooperation between the CEIP and the DHfP.⁸² At the same meeting, Prittwitz-Gaffron also criticized the relationship with Foerster and Gerlach who were, however, vigorously defended by the Austrian representative Josef Redlich.⁸³

Babcock reported on the discussion to Butler and pointed out that financially supporting Gerlach and Foerster might expose the CEIP to “justifiable suspicion.”⁸⁴ In his reply, Butler stressed the necessity to “balance” the relationship with the two notorious pacifists “with some representatives of a different type and viewpoint.”⁸⁵ In addition, by referring to both his and Babcock’s approaching trips to Berlin, he stressed that “it might be important to make some geste in Germany that will correct the impression that we are not sympathetic with the new political forces in the German

⁸⁰ Friedrich W. Foerster to Mr. Sander, April 1, 1924, pp. 1-2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 3, RBML.

⁸¹ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, March 25, 1926, p. 4, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 4, RBML.

⁸² *Compte-rendu des Seances tenues par MM., Les Membres du Comite d’Administration du Centre Europeen, Dotation Carnegie Pour la Paix Internationale*, March 22, 1926, pp. 9-10, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 105, Folder 3, RBML.

⁸³ *Compte-rendu des Seances tenues par MM., Les Membres du Comite d’Administration du Centre Europeen, Dotation Carnegie Pour la Paix Internationale*, March 22, 1926, pp. 11-12, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 105, Folder 3, RBML.

⁸⁴ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, April 20, 1926, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 4, RBML.

⁸⁵ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, May 4, 1926, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

state.”⁸⁶ The CEIP leadership was concerned with the political repercussions of the Endowment’s associations with politically controversial figures such as Gerlach and Foerster. The CEIP thus developed its relationship with the DHfP out of the necessity to establish connections with German political and intellectual circles that were not isolated because of their criticism against national political and social developments.

Babcock organized a visit to Berlin, which he hoped would “place us in a position for vigorous and concrete action.”⁸⁷ Emblematically Jäckh and Prittwitz-Gaffron organized this visit.⁸⁸ Under the guidance of Prittwitz-Gaffron, Babcock repeatedly met with Jäckh and Hans Simons, and remained impressed by the teaching activities at the German School of Politics.⁸⁹ During a concluding meeting with the leadership of the DHfP, Babcock discussed the possibility to support the special courses of the School, the establishment of an exchange program, and the development of a long-term cooperation with the DHfP through the establishment of a Berlin Carnegie Chair.⁹⁰ After this visit, the leadership of the School of Politics prepared for the reception of Butler, whose visit in Jäckh’s words represented the final point of a series of conversations regarding forms of cooperation that had started in the fall of 1924.⁹¹

Butler visited Berlin shortly after Babcock and left with the impression that the DHfP should replace Gerlach and Foerster as the Endowment’s representative in

⁸⁶ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, May 4, 1926, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁸⁷ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, May 14, 1926, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁸⁸ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, May 20, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁸⁹ Earle B. Babcock, *Note for President Butler on my visit to Berlin June 6 – June 8 inclusive*, June 10, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁹⁰ *Aufzeichnung über die Besprechung zwischen Mr. Earle B. Babcock, Professor Dr. Jäckh, Dr. von Prittwitz-Gaffron, Dr. Hans Simons über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Carnegie Stiftung und der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, June 8, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁹¹ Ernst Jäckh to Nicholas M. Butler, June 24, 1926, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML.

Germany. Writing Babcock, Butler stressed his conviction that the DHfP should become the “official or at least unofficial agency and representative in Germany” and that the CEIP should “strengthen their hands in all possible ways.”⁹² A few days later, he added that, “for the benefit of our prestige and effectiveness in Germany,” Babcock had to establish an administrative center in Berlin, headed by Prittwitz-Gaffron and based at the DHfP, which both Carl H. Becker and Gustav Stresemann had recommended.⁹³ By contrast, he reported on the negative impression raised by the association of the CEIP with Foerster.⁹⁴ In the following days, Prittwitz-Gaffron expressed his satisfaction with Butler’s positive impression of the DHfP,⁹⁵ and viewed the establishment of the Carnegie Chair in Berlin as a proof of the new work of the CEIP and of “Germany’s active cooperation to the solution of international problems.”⁹⁶ While the leadership of the DHfP therefore viewed the cooperation with the CEIP as a way to break Germany’s international isolation, Butler and Haskell saw a particular value in the School’s plans to develop relationships with the French International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation and the Royal Institute of International Relations in London.⁹⁷

In October, the Board of Trustees of the CEIP passed the resolution establishing a Carnegie Chair in International Relations at the DHfP and invited James T. Shotwell to

⁹² Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, June 28, 1926, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁹³ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, June 30, 1926, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁹⁴ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, June 30, 1926, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 107, Folder 5, RBML.

⁹⁵ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Nicholas M. Butler, June 29, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 129, Folder 4, RBML.

⁹⁶ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Nicholas M. Butler, July 31, 1926, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 129, Folder 4, RBML.

⁹⁷ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, September 14, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 1, RBML, Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, September 28, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 1, RBML and Henry S. Haskett to Ernst Jäckh, September 23, 1926, CEIP Record, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML.

accept the position for the academic year of 1926-27.⁹⁸ The leadership of the DHfP viewed the Chair as a way to strengthen the relationship between Germany and the United States.⁹⁹ High-ranking German political leaders including the Chancellor, the President of the State of Prussia, several Reich ministers, and the State Secretary of the Reich President attended Shotwell's address on occasion of the inauguration of the Carnegie Chair.¹⁰⁰ In addition, the nomination of Moritz J. Bonn as an additional German delegate to the Advisory Council further strengthened the relationship between the CEIP and the DHfP.¹⁰¹

Butler, Haskell, and Babcock sought out politically pragmatic voices in Germany who had the opportunity to make a difference in the country's socio-political development. Pragmatically, therefore, the leadership of the CEIP gradually turned away from the radical criticism of the two German Special Correspondents and made the DHfP the official face of the Endowment in Germany. Butler grew convinced that, "If we are to work with the new Germany, we must work with her spokesmen and representatives and should make no progress if we tried to work only with the Foerstes," although he noted that Foerster's supporters denounced Jäckh's lack of a "sincere liberal opinion."¹⁰²

Similarly, Babcock argued that while Foerster and Gerlach had been "of great service to the Endowment at the time when they were the only Germans with whom it was possible

⁹⁸ Nicholas M. Butler to Walter Simons, November 4, 1926, CEIP Records, Series VI, Box 228, Folder 6, RBML.

⁹⁹ Walter Simons to Nicholas M. Butler, December 8, 1926, CEIP Records, Series VI, Box 228, Folder 6, RBML.

¹⁰⁰ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Nicholas M. Butler, March 11, 1927, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 129, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁰¹ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Nicholas M. Butler, December 10, 1926, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 129, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁰² Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, December 21, 1926, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 1, RBML. In the same period, the left-Catholic *Rhein-Mainischen Volkszeitung* (December 29, 1926) attacked the CEIP by pointing out its relationship with the "reactionary-feudal" Prittwitz-Gaffron. Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Carl H. Becker, January 10, 1927, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 2404.

to collaborate,” the CEIP could not cooperate “with only one element, especially as such an attitude would neutralize our efforts for collaboration with Germany at the present time.”¹⁰³ Emblematically, with the establishment of the Berlin Carnegie Chair, a Special Committee of the Trustees reviewing the work of the Endowment concluded that all obstacles for a full cooperation with Germany had been removed.¹⁰⁴

The change of policy of the CEIP flared up Foerster’s anger, whose growing criticism of Germany’s political leadership had exposed him to political repercussions. In a letter received by Butler in July 1927, Foerster accused the CEIP Trustees to have leaked one of his confidential reports to the German Foreign Office, which had ordered his arrest at Germany’s frontiers.¹⁰⁵ Noting the “desire” within the Endowment “to be in good relation with the official world of Germany,” he enquired whether his services were still needed.¹⁰⁶ In the tone of a *J’accuse*, he stated,

Germany will be thrown by her Prussian warlords into a new catastrophe. ... 6-8 years later you will remember my words today! Kindly think a little about the question, whether the attitude, which the Carnegie-Dotation is taking towards my work and towards the very enemies of my work, will not be regretted in the future. ... It is not I who is damaged by this attitude – I am a king without your crown. I only want to put the question whether your Carnegie-people are not putting on the false horse and will regret that one day, when it will be too late, to repair the damage caused by such encouragement of an absolute disloyal set of people?¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, January 10, 1927, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 2, RBML.

¹⁰⁴ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the Special Committee on Policy Appointed February 16, 1925, as Amended December 2, 1926* (Washington: Library of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1927), p. 5, CEIP Records, Series VIII, Box 342, Folder 3, RBML.

¹⁰⁵ Friedrich W. Foerster to Henry S. Haskell, n.d [received on July 25, 1927], pp. 1-2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁰⁶ Friedrich W. Foerster to Henry S. Haskell, n.d [received on July 25, 1927], p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁰⁷ Friedrich W. Foerster to Henry S. Haskell, n.d [received on July 25, 1927], pp. 3-4, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

He then concluded his letter by issuing the warning that Germany could not be helped “by shutting simply your eyes to the criminal undertakings to which she is enslaved.”¹⁰⁸

Personal animosity certainly motivated Foerster’s attacks against Jäckh and the leadership of the DHfP. Nonetheless, he correctly drew attention to Jäckh’s pragmatic approach to the new political regime. Furthermore, he clearly saw the nationalism that was peculiar of the liberal circle that had formed around Friedrich Naumann and was the basis of the approach of the German School of Politics.

Confronted with these accusations, the CEIP leadership gradually downgraded the relationship with Foerster. In a conjoined reply to Foerster’s “queries,”¹⁰⁹ Babcock and Haskell, although expressing their appreciation for Foerster’s frankness and the hope in a continuation of the cooperation, stated that it was not CEIP policy to “adopt any attitude towards questions of internal politics in any country even the United States.”¹¹⁰ The number and regularity of Foerster’s reports sensibly decreased in the following years.¹¹¹ Eventually, in the summer of 1929 Haskell informed Foerster of the end of their working relationship because of both a change in the CEIP policy and Foerster’s lack of direct contact with Germany, as he was living in Switzerland and France.¹¹²

The relationship between the DHfP and the CEIP developed in the peculiar context of the second half of the 1920s. The DHfP naturally attracted the interest of U.S. foundations. Jäckh and his associates had developed the notion of the “New Germany”

¹⁰⁸ Friedrich W. Foerster to Henry S. Haskell, n.d [received on July 25, 1927], p. 4, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁰⁹ Earle B. Babcock to Henry S. Haskell, August 23, 1927, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 4, RBML.

¹¹⁰ Earle B. Babcock to Friedrich W. Foerster, September 23, 1927, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 108, Folder 5, RBML.

¹¹¹ See CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

¹¹² Henry S. Haskell to Friedrich W. Foerster, July 27, 1929, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML and Henry S. Haskell to Friedrich W. Foerster, August 5, 1929, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 122, Folder 4, RBML.

and celebrated its democratization.¹¹³ Quite consequentially foreign public opinion viewed the DHfP as a stronghold of democratic forces in the Weimar Republic.¹¹⁴ The rhetoric of the “New Germany” was part of a general turn to internationalism and foreign affairs, as the stabilization of republican institutions appeared to create the preconditions for a new foreign policy. The celebration of the new democratic Germany paralleled, however, a renewed emphasis on Germany’s leading role in Europe. The leadership of the DHfP linked Europe’s political stability to the reestablishment of Germany’s international role. Like in the immediate aftermath of the war, internationalism aimed to revise the Versailles Treaty and break Germany’s international isolation.

Jäckh expounded on the position of the leadership of the DHfP in a series of lectures held between October and November 1927 in Berlin’s radio broadcasting.¹¹⁵ He pointed to Germany’s peculiar geopolitical position in Europe, which contributed to its political and diplomatic isolation.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, he argued, Germany was connected to the international community through its population and economy. Germany was integrated in Europe’s economic system because of its central role in continental commercial routes.¹¹⁷ In addition, numerous, large German communities were living in other European countries, hence connecting Germany to its neighboring states.¹¹⁸ It was Germany’s task, and the task of its politicians, to unify the German people and rebuild

¹¹³ See for example Ernst Jäckh, *The New Germany* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), Otto Hoetzsch, *Germany's Domestic and Foreign Policies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), and Bonn, *The Crisis of European Democracy*. See also Rose C. Feld, “Jackh finds students not afraid to think,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1927.

¹¹⁴ Rose C. Feld, “New University Trains Germans For Politics,” *New York Times* (December 20, 1925) and *Manchester Guardian*, “The New Germany,” August 19, 1927, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 11, Scrapbook 19, RBML.

¹¹⁵ The lectures were published as Ernst Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas. Nationale Grundlagen internationaler Politik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1928).

¹¹⁶ Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 14-24.

¹¹⁷ Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 54-60.

¹¹⁸ Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 39-41.

the country's power, although this must be done through the League of Nations.¹¹⁹ Jäckh viewed Germany as “the symbol not only of a German destiny of her own, but also of a joint European destiny.”¹²⁰ Germany's entanglement with Europe through population and economy therefore connected Germany's future and Europe's fate.

Jäckh related the transformation of Germany and of international relations to the “Spirit of Locarno.” The Locarno Treaties (October 1925) normalized international relations with Germany and guaranteed post-war western borders, whereas eastern borders remained open to revisions. In September 1926, the ratification of the treaties in Geneva opened the door to Germany's membership in the League of Nations. In this context, foreign affairs became one of the biggest challenges for the Weimar governments, as the DNVP continued its attacks against Stresemann's foreign policy, the Locarno Treaties, and Germany's membership in the League of Nations.¹²¹ By contrast, Jäckh viewed the international spirit of Locarno and Geneva as both a necessity of Germany's isolation and a product of interconnections that once again were centered on Germany.¹²² As they had temporarily done in the immediate post-war period, Jäckh and his associates believed that membership in the League of Nations and the Locarno Treaties would pave the path to a new German foreign policy. The normalization of foreign relations had followed internal stabilization, and thus it seemed possible to re-insert Germany in the international community.

In the second half of the 1920s, Germany's political elites viewed international treaties and the League of Nations as tools for a revision of the provisions that were

¹¹⁹ Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 43-47 and 62-63.

¹²⁰ Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 70.

¹²¹ Dietrich Orlow, *Weimar Prussia, 1925-1933. The Illusion of Strength* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1991), 40-41.

¹²² Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 87-94.

limiting German sovereignty.¹²³ The liberal leadership of the DHfP, however, stressed the necessity for a peaceful revision of the Versailles Treaty and pointed to a political conduct that had also been at the center of their analysis of domestic policies. Walter Simons celebrated the legal principle dominating political thought in the aftermath of the war and the ideal of international arbitration, which would protect weak and disarmed countries such as Germany. Consequentially, he supported Germany's membership in the League of Nations but also warned that the League was a political organization, and the essence of politics was the willingness to compromise rather than the certainty of "rights."¹²⁴ Similarly, Becker argued that direct contacts and knowledge of national ideologies were the best ways to foster international understanding.¹²⁵ Compromise, political education, and personal contacts thus were at the center of the foreign policy approach of these intellectuals, as they had been in their attempt to counter German political society's radicalization in the immediate aftermath of the war.

German elites viewed cultural policy, foreign policy objectives, and scientific internationalism as profoundly entangled, as their approach to U.S. foundations confirmed. Emblematically, Becker noted in regard, "Of course all these organizations [U.S. philanthropic foundations] fundamentally are private, but nonetheless they are the most important power tool in the government's diplomatic struggle for decisive cultural

¹²³ Heinrich Graf von Bernstorff, "Deutschland unter den Weltvölkern und im Völkerbund," in *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Republik. Ein Handbuch republikanischer Politik*, edited by Anton Erkelenz (Berlin: Sieben Stäbe-Verlags- und Druckerei Gesellschaft, 1928) and Bernhard Dernburg, "Die Friedensverträge von 1919 – Ihr Einfluß auf Deutschland und Europa – Der Leidensweg der Reparationen – Der Dawes-Plan," in *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Republik. Ein Handbuch republikanischer Politik*, edited by Anton Erkelenz (Berlin: Sieben Stäbe-Verlags- und Druckerei Gesellschaft, 1928). See also the two volumes of Heinrich Schnee and Hans Draeger, eds., *Zehn Jahre Versailles* (Berlin: Brückenverlag G.M.B.H., 1929).

¹²⁴ Walter Simons, *Der Rechtsgedanke in der Politik*, Die vierte Jahresfeier der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, Festvortrag des Reichsgerichtspräsidenten Dr. Walter Simons (Berlin: Carl Heymanns Verlag, 1925).

¹²⁵ Becker, "Internationaler Gedanke und nationale Erziehung," 365-366.

influence.”¹²⁶ Two memoranda in possession of Friedrich Schmidt-Ott (the president of the “Emergency Association of German Science”) confirm the general interest in the activities of U.S. philanthropic foundations in Germany, thus pointing to the attention of German cultural elites to this form of cultural policy.¹²⁷ At an anecdotal level, but with an emblematic value, a German engineer, after having been awarded a Rockefeller travel fellowship to the United States, inquired with the “Association of German Universities” whether Rockefeller institutes had participated in the “cultural war” against Germany.¹²⁸ In his reply, the chair of the Association stressed the “objective scientific attitude” of the Rockefeller Foundation,¹²⁹ although he wondered whether the fellowship was an attempt to “discover German technological secrets.”¹³⁰ From the German perspective, therefore, there was no doubt that foundations were at the center of a system of cultural policy, and cultural policy was clearly entangled with cultural diplomacy.

Consequently, German elites linked the internationalization of cultural policy to foreign policy goals. By the mid-1920s, these public intellectuals articulated the international tasks of the DHfP, as well as of political education in general, with renewed emphasis.¹³¹ The leadership of the DHfP viewed the institute as a tool for the reconstruction of Germany’s international role. For the School, Wilhelm Hass stated, internationalism was the “means” to achieve the goal of national liberation. At the same

¹²⁶ Carl H. Becker, “Organisatorische Voraussetzung einer Reichskulturpolitik,” Festrede bei der Feier Dr. Solf’s 70. Geburtstag in der Lessing-Hochschule, n.d., p. 2. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 8133.

¹²⁷ These two memoranda detailed the 1929 reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropy and, in regard to its impact on Germany, concluded, “For now everything seems to remain as before.” *Rockefeller-Stiftungen*, n.d., p. 6, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 915. See also *Bericht*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 915.

¹²⁸ [?] Denker to Otto Scheel, August 8, 1925, BArch, R 8088/705.

¹²⁹ Otto Scheel to [?] Denker, August 13, 1925, BArch, R 8088/705.

¹³⁰ Otto Scheel to [?] Denker, August 24, 1925, p. 1. BArch, R 8088/705.

¹³¹ On occasion of the sixth anniversary of the DHfP, Walter Simons requested a meeting with Chancellor Wilhelm Marx to discuss the “international tasks” of the DHfP. Walter Simons to Wilhelm Marx, October 13, 1926, BArch, R 43-I/773.

time, he continued, the creation of a sphere of commonality among nations was a “goal” of this internationalism.¹³² In the same edited volume, Otto Hoetzsch distinguished between two types of foreign policy education. Foreign policy *Bildung* provided knowledge, understanding, and methods, whereas *Erziehung* aimed to create the precondition for a transformation of will into practice.¹³³ Accordingly, the leadership of the DHfP clearly linked the re-establishment of the state’s international power to political education.

It was again Becker who stressed the interconnections between cultural policy and cultural diplomacy.¹³⁴ He argued that “a distinguished cultural-political propaganda” must be conducted through exchange programs, the founding of new national research institutes, the contribution to international scientific debates, and the participation in international conferences.¹³⁵ Emblematically, Prittwitz-Gaffron immediately informed Becker about his nomination as German delegate to the Advisory Council of the European Bureau of the CEIP.¹³⁶ In addition, the reference letters for the LSRM fellowships in the social sciences testify to the close connection between internationalism

¹³² Wilhelm Haas, “Auslandsarbeit,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 257-258.

¹³³ Otto Hoetzsch, “Außenpolitische Bildung und außenpolitische Erziehung,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 16-19.

¹³⁴ See also Gertrud Bäumer, “Das deutsche Schulwesen, wie es ist und wie es sein soll,” in *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Republik. Ein Handbuch republikanischer Politik*, edited by Anton Erkelenz (Berlin: Sieben Stäbe-Verlags- und Druckerei Gesellschaft, 1928), 256-257 and Gertrud Bäumer, “Reich und Schule,” in *Schule und Leben. Schriftreihe zur politische Propädeutik. Im Auftrag der deutschen Hochschule für Politik, Band 2*, edited by Johann Strunz (Leipzig: B. G. Tuebner, 1930), 9.

¹³⁵ Carl H. Becker, “Organisatorische Voraussetzung einer Reichskulturpolitik,” *Festrede bei der Feier Dr. Solf’s 70. Geburtstag in der Lessing-Hochschule*, n.d., p. 4. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 8133.

¹³⁶ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Carl H. Becker, September 21, 1925, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 2404.

and foreign policy objectives in the eyes of Germany's cultural elites.¹³⁷ In what became a standard practice, reference letters served to discuss whether a potential candidate could “represent German scientific striving abroad and, in so doing, be a part of the propaganda for the cultural Germany.”¹³⁸ Furthermore, the correspondence between Walter Simons and Becker on the need to coordinate their lecture tours in the United States in the summer of 1930 confirms this strategic approach.¹³⁹ These examples point to the understanding of Germany's cultural elites of scientific and cultural internationalism. International scientific and scholarly networks provided venues for a cultural propaganda that aimed to re-establish Germany's role in the international community.

These comments pinpoint the specific German perspective on the relationship between cultural policy and foreign policy. In different ways, they pointed to the entanglement of cultural institutions and foreign policy goals. With the stabilization of the Weimar Republic, the leadership of the DHfP viewed international connections as the path for the re-establishment of Germany's role in Europe. While U.S. foundations became the drivers of American internationalism in the aftermath of the war and aimed to support democracy by spreading American values and institutional models, Germans viewed international cultural relationships as part of foreign policy, which aimed to reestablish Germany's centrality in European affairs.

Rockefeller Philanthropic Institutions and “Objective” Social Sciences

¹³⁷ Between 1924 and 1932, the LSRM awarded 55 fellowships with an average of \$5,000 each and a total of \$275,000. *Von der Rockefeller Foundation der Notgemeinschaft zur Verwaltung übertragene Mittel*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 915.

¹³⁸ [?] Grünhut to August W. Fehling, April 15, 1933, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 487. See GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 917.

¹³⁹ Carl H. Becker to Walter Simons, June 24, 1930, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4788 and Walter Simons to Carl H. Becker, July 1, 1930, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4788. See also GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 8315 and Becker's fascinating account of the journey. Carl H. Becker, *Reiseerlebnisse in Amerika*, Sept. 4-Nov. 16, 1930, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1716.

The study of society and the support of the social sciences became a crucial part of the activities of U.S. foundations. Empirical social sciences provided the tools to analyze society, its ills, and capitalism's problems. Private philanthropy became increasingly involved in the social sciences because, based on empirical research and quantitative data, they embodied the new faith in "scientific knowledge" for the good life and the good society.¹⁴⁰ Established in 1913 amid nation-wide polemics,¹⁴¹ the Rockefeller Foundation had, however, only reluctantly approached the social sciences. It had commissioned a study on industrial relations after the "Ludlow Massacre,"¹⁴² which was followed by a general outcry against the connections between the philanthropies and the business activities of the Rockefeller family.¹⁴³ As a result, the Rockefeller Foundation carefully avoided the social sciences until the end of the 1920s, and rather emphasized its focus on objective research and knowledge.

Nonetheless, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRM) embodied the interest of Rockefeller philanthropies in social welfare, and hence in the social sciences.¹⁴⁴ The LSRM was established in October 1918 in memory of John D.

¹⁴⁰ Martin Bulmer and Joan Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Sciences in the 1920s: Beardsley Rummler and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, 1922-1929," *Minerva*, vol. 19 (1981), 347-348.

¹⁴¹ Against the background of a federal antitrust suit against Standard Oil, John D. Rockefeller, Sr. sought a federal charter for the Rockefeller Foundation in 1909. Although willing to make numerous concessions to the federal government, Rockefeller eventually chartered the Foundation in New York State in 1913. Chernow, *Titan*, 561-570.

¹⁴² During a prolonged strike at southern Colorado coalfields, the Colorado National Guard attacked a strikers' tent colony in Ludlow and killed several coal workers in April 1914. The "Ludlow Massacre" tainted the name of the Rockefeller family, which controlled one of the companies involved in the incident. Chernow, *Titan*, 571-590.

¹⁴³ For the impact of the massacre see Barbara Howe, "The Emergence of Scientific Philanthropy, 1900-1920: Origins, Issues, and Outcomes," in *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*, 25-54.

¹⁴⁴ For the following see Bulmer and Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Sciences in the 1920s," 347-407 and Donald Fisher, "The Role of Philanthropic Foundations in the Reproduction and Production of Hegemony: Rockefeller Foundations and the Social Sciences," *Sociology*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1983), 206-233. Martin Bulmer and Donald Fisher were involved in an acrimonious debate over the role of philanthropic foundations in a modern democracy. On the debate see Salma Ahmad, "American Foundations and the Development of the Social Sciences between the Wars: Comment on the Debate between Martin Bulmer and Donald Fisher," *Sociology*, vol. 25, no. 3 (1991), 511-520.

Rockefeller, Sr.'s wife and remained in existence until January 1929. The nomination of the relatively unknown Beardsly Ruml as director (May 1921) and the relative secrecy of its grant-making activities testified to its cautious approach to social issues. Nonetheless, Ruml enjoyed considerable freedom of maneuver, and developed a comprehensive strategy for the support to the social sciences that was rooted in the belief that social welfare required a better understanding of the factors influencing human actions and societies. Ruml aimed to break disciplinary boundaries and to support specific institutional centers in order to foster the development of the social sciences in both the United States and abroad. Furthermore, he created a network of institutes with a common approach to research in the social sciences by establishing a social science fellowship program.

In the second half of the 1920s, the LSRM and, after the reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropies, the RF supported the DHfP. The grants from the LSRM supported the DHfP in a period of financial emergency. The decline of private support and the uncertain access to public funds made American grants vital for the School's survival. Officers of the LSRM recognized the democratic value of the School but attempted to spur research in the social sciences. The grants from Rockefeller philanthropic institutions contributed to the School's gradual shift from vocational training to research. In so doing, the DHfP slowly abandoned its original emphasis on the "politics of civility," which had been rooted in objective, practical education.

Ernst Jäckh had devoted much energy and time to court potential foreign investors in 1924 and during the winter of 1925-26. The American Ambassador to Germany

Alanson B. Houghton had introduced Jäckh to the RF and the CEIP,¹⁴⁵ and served with his predecessor Ellis Loring Dresel and Professor Borchert (Yale University) as reference for the School's application for a grant from the LSRM.¹⁴⁶ The School's democratic outlook (in addition to the potential for future scientific research) was crucial for securing an initial grant. Nonetheless, the correspondence between the leadership of the DHfP and the officers of the LSRM highlights both Jäckh's skills as a fundraiser and the role of LSRM officers in negotiating between program requirements and the realities of Germany's political context.

Jäckh and his associates presented the DHfP as the embodiment of the "new Germany" and stressed its practical approach. Jäckh highlighted the School's emphasis on the combination of theory and practice,¹⁴⁷ and argued that the Treaty of Locarno had originated in round-tables organized by the DHfP.¹⁴⁸ He celebrated the School as the first institute bringing together "members of all parties" and as a place where the only requirement of instructors was knowledge and readiness, "while criticizing the republic, not to destroy it."¹⁴⁹ He pointed out the support to the "new democratic state" and the

¹⁴⁵ Jäckh, *Die "alte" Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, 7.

¹⁴⁶ *Overview of the German Academy for Political Science*, p. 1. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, folder 537, box 51, Record Group (RG) 3.6, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRM) Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York (hereafter designated RAC).

¹⁴⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, p. 1, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁴⁸ *Overview of the German Academy for Political Science*, p. 2. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC. See also the later Ernst Jäckh, "Beiträge zum Locarno- und Kellogg-Vertrag," in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 1-12. In his memoirs, Jäckh claimed that Richard Riedl (the Austrian envoy in Berlin and the promoter of the Locarno Treaty) had contacted him in January 1923 because distressed by the German-French enmity and proposed to draft a "Rhine Security Pact" with the help of Jäckh's collaborators from the DHfP. The draft prepared with the help of Hans and Walter Simons, Moritz J. Bonn, Hugo Preuß, and Prof. Schücking became the basis of the Locarno Treaty. Ernst Jäckh, *Weltstaat. Erlebtes und Erstrebtes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1960), 94-98.

¹⁴⁹ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, p. 2, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

active cooperation with state agencies and ministries.¹⁵⁰ In this initial contact with the LSRM, therefore, the leadership of the DHfP emphasized the democratic nature of the School and pointed to the connections between objective approaches to knowledge and practical impact on public affairs.

The LSRM was aware of the School's focus on democratic education rather than on empiric research. In a widely cited report, August Wilhelm Fehling, the German advisor of the Rockefeller Foundation for the social sciences, pointed to the numerous limits of the DHfP in developing "serious research" in the social sciences. He suggested that the School was unable to attract young scholars because of its unclear standing in German academia. Furthermore, Fehling stressed the low quality of students, and rhetorically asked, "Who are the students? Are they indeed the prospective political leaders of the country? May be, may not be. As things are now, it may be doubted."¹⁵¹ Nonetheless, he noted that the DHfP was "a foundation of the republican time with the aim of creating among German youth a spirit of understanding of the republic and its needs," in which a "liberal and democratic atmosphere" prevailed.¹⁵² Fehling's report therefore pointed to the tension that developed between the goal of funding empiric social sciences and the conviction of program officers that the DHfP was one of the few, genuinely democratic forces in Weimar Germany.

As skillful fundraisers, Jäckh and his associates pointed to the similarities between the DHfP and other institutes supported by the LSRM. Walter Simons stressed

¹⁵⁰ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, p. 2, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵¹ August W. Fehling, *Report*, n.d., p. 2. Enclosed in August W. Fehling to Beardsley Ruml, January 31, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵² August W. Fehling, *Report*, n.d., p. 1. Enclosed in August W. Fehling to Beardsley Ruml, January 31, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

that the LSRM had already supported institutes like the DHfP in Germany, and defined the London School of Economics (LSE) – one of the major European grantees of the LSRM – as the “sister institution in London.”¹⁵³ Similarly, Jäckh compared the DHfP to the LSE,¹⁵⁴ and pointed out that the funds requested did not reach half of the support given to the LSE, the “English parallel of our German institute.”¹⁵⁵ Strategically, the leadership of the DHfP placed the School at the center of Ruml’s grand strategy by emphasizing the similarities with other grantees of the LSRM.

In applying for the grant, the DHfP proposed a 1926 budget that showed a significant expansion of activities. Compared to 1925, public funds remained stable, whereas income from patrons slightly increased (from M 400,000 to M 422,500), as did lecture fees (from M 58,000 to M 61,500). Conversely, expenses swelled from M 724,000 to M 960,000. This increase primarily depended on the expansion of research activities (from M 64,000 to M 109,000) and the creation of a new German-American exchange program (M 120,000), although the expenses for publications (from M 30,000 to M 52,000) and library and archives (from M 22,000 to M 27,000) also increased.¹⁵⁶ In a second letter, Jäckh stated that, “as a consequence of the great crisis in Germany,” seven contributors had withdrawn their pledges for 1926, diminishing the income by M 108,000, and thus increasing the total deficit to M 311,000.¹⁵⁷ Consequentially, American

¹⁵³ Walter Simons to Beardsley Ruml, July 29, 1925. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926: folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵⁴ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, pp. 3-4, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵⁵ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, February 12, 1926, p. 4, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵⁶ *1925 Budget* and *1926 Budget*. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 14, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

philanthropic support would compensate the falling of other private donations and be primarily used to expand the School's research activities.

Jäckh combined the plans of broadening the School's scope with an emphasis on financial difficulties. He expounded on these plans by detailing the creation of academic chairs in American subjects and international economics and the establishment of a German-American exchange program for both instructors and students.¹⁵⁸ Surprised, Ruml noted that the need for external funds stemmed from the intention to expand the School's activities, rather than from a "temporary falling-off of your contributions," as Jäckh had suggested during a previous meeting.¹⁵⁹ In his reply, Jäckh intertwined the School's new tasks, financial difficulties, and "the necessities of the New Germany, internationalized education and work for World Peace."¹⁶⁰ Likewise, Simons pointed to the tension between the increase in quantity and quality of attendants and the financial difficulties.¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, reacting to Ruml's comments, Jäckh agreed to cut the exchange program in order to secure the LSRM grant.¹⁶²

In March 1926, Ruml communicated that the Trustees of the LSRM had appropriated a grant of up to \$50,000 for 1926 and 1927. The LSRM agreed to contribute \$1 for each \$5 received from other sources but the grant could not exceed \$25,000 in one year. Ruml pointed out, however, that it was a one-time grant made "in consideration of the emergency situation now existing."¹⁶³ The grant supported the new activities of the

¹⁵⁸ *Overview of the German Academy for Political Science*. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 9, 1926, pp. 2-3, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁵⁹ Beardsley Ruml to Ernst Jäckh, January 14, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁶⁰ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, January 24, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁶¹ Cited in Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, February 12, 1926, pp. 1-2, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁶² Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Ruml, February 12, 1926, pp. 3-4, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁶³ Beardsley Ruml to Hans Simons, March 18, 1926, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

DHfP, primarily research seminars and research work, publications, and the completion of the library.¹⁶⁴ Although the LSRM considered this two-year grant a one-time appropriation made because of the School's financial difficulties, it represented – by not being exclusively driven by scientific considerations – a precedent in the relationship between Rockefeller philanthropy and the DHfP.

The leadership of the School reorganized the educational program against the background of declining private donations and the influx of American grants and public funds. By the winter semester of 1925-26, the DHfP had expanded its special seminars. Wolfers directed the new “Political Seminar,” which aimed to discuss the major political questions of the day. Under Adolf Grabowsky's directorship, the “Geo-Political Seminar” explored geo-politics in connection to world economy and world politics, hence moving beyond the traditional field of political geography. Lastly, Carl Mennicke directed the new “Socio-Political Seminar,” which unified the “School of Social Services” and the “School of Economics.” The former aimed to prepare new social workers, whereas the latter trained officials of trade unions.¹⁶⁵ The following year, Johann Strunz opened the “Youth Seminar” (in 1929 transformed into the “Civics Seminar”), which took over the School's work in civic education.¹⁶⁶

This systemization led to an institutional reorganization in 1927 and 1928. The main course of studies was divided in an “Academic Department,” which awarded a degree, and a “Seminar Department” (the previous “Political Seminar”). Under the direction of the Faculty Council, the “Academic Department” included the concentration

¹⁶⁴ Hans Simons to Frank B. Stubbs, June 11, 1927, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁶⁵ DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1925/26*, pp. 20-23, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 11.

¹⁶⁶ DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1926/27*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 13 and DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1929/30*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 19.

areas of general politics and political history (with Friedrich Meinecke), foreign policy and international law (with Otto Hoetzsch), domestic policy and constitutional law (with Herman Heller), political psychology and foreign policy (with Wilhelm Haas), and economic and financial policy. Arnold Wolfers directed the “Seminar Department,” which had Georg Cleinow, Adolf Grabowsky, Theodor Heuss, and Richmond Lennox as full-time faculty, and focused on the philosophical basis and theory of politics, political history and foreign policy, the legal basis of politics, the economic basis of politics, press and cultural and educational policy, and foreign languages.¹⁶⁷

By the late-1920s therefore the DHfP had gradually abandoned its early focus on civic education and vocational training. The grants from the LSRM favored this development with their emphasis on research. An analysis of the disciplinary focus of the DHfP confirms this shift. While domestic politics played an important role for a couple of years with the stabilization of the republic, political theory and political history were marginalized by the mid-1920, and civic education disappeared from the main course of studies, as it was relegated to the “Youth Seminar” (and later “Civics Seminar”). Conversely, the exponential growth of foreign politics reflected the possibilities of the new international context and the integration of conservative scholars.¹⁶⁸ American grants allowed the expansion of the activities of the DHfP, which private German sources could not support. Quite naturally, therefore, the LSRM influenced the direction of the School’s expansion because the leadership of the DHfP strategically selected programs that were in line with the interests of the American donors.

¹⁶⁷ DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1927/28*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 15.

¹⁶⁸ Lehnert, “‘Politik als Wissenschaft’,” 451-454.

In the following years, the leadership of the DHfP skillfully courted the representatives of the LSRM and emphasized the scientific and research work supported by the grant.¹⁶⁹ Jäckh pointed to the reorganization of the main course of studies, stressed the cooperation with the Paris-based Institute of International Cooperation, and argued that the incorporation of the PK fostered cross-party cooperation.¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, although the expenses had been kept even in 1926, 1927, and 1928, he stressed that the financial problems were not solved because of a lack of both private and public support.¹⁷¹ Emblematically, in the estimates for the fiscal year of 1928/29, it was argued,

It must be stressed that the establishment of the “Academic Department” would not have been possible without the help of the Rockefeller Foundation, Precisely for this department, however, expenditures accrue from faculties’ payroll ... and extra expenses, which amount to the Rockefeller Foundation’s contribution over the past two years.¹⁷²

The DHfP leadership therefore justified the request of additional funds by pointing to the School’s development in the direction envisioned by the LSRM. Strategically, they linked the expenditures of the School to the programs developed with American grants. By stressing this connection, Jäckh and his associates described the essence of the School’s development in the second half of the 1920s. In fact, because of financial difficulties, the DHfP was able to develop those programs, which corresponded to American goals and could be sustained only by additional American grants (to the detriment of other programs).

¹⁶⁹ Hans Simons to Frank B. Stubbs, June 11, 1927, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷⁰ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Rumml, November 29, 1927, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷¹ Ernst Jäckh to Beardsley Rumml, November 29, 1927, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷² DHfP, *Voranschlag für das Geschäftsjahr 1928/29*, January 26, 1928, p. 3, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

Ruml welcomed the School's new developments and forwarded the request for new funds to the Executive Committee, although stressing that the initial grant had explicitly been a one-time appropriation.¹⁷³ In the spring of 1928, however, the LSRM renewed the grant for an additional year, on the condition that the gift would not be publicized.¹⁷⁴ Nonetheless, although noting the positive developments of the DHfP, Fehling again commented, "Most of the items for which funds are requested cannot be classified as research; some are purely instructional in nature and others are definitely political in implication."¹⁷⁵ By the end of the 1920s therefore the DHfP had established strong ties with the LSRM. Officers and advisors of the Memorial, however, pointed to the limited development of social science research, although acknowledging the developments in that direction. At the same time, the DHfP had systemized its course of studies and expanded its research work with the support of American grants.

At the end of the 1920s, Rockefeller philanthropic institutions were reorganized and, in January 1929, the LSRM ceased to exist.¹⁷⁶ Since 1926, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. had aimed to restructure Rockefeller philanthropy, and a committee of three trustees – Raymond Fosdick, Arthur Woods, and Ernest M. Hopkins – reviewed the activities of the Memorial and made recommendations for its incorporation in the RF. Ruml's former assistant, Edmund E. Day (a statistician and economist trained at Harvard) was named director of the new Division of Social Sciences (DSS). Day continued the pattern of support to the social sciences that Ruml had developed. After the reorganization,

¹⁷³ Beardsley Ruml to Ernst Jäckh, December 22, 1927, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷⁴ Beardsley Ruml to Ernst Jäckh, April 6, 1928, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷⁵ August W. Fehling to Edmund E. Day, May 3, 1928, folder 537, box 51, RG 3.6, LSRM Archives, RAC.

¹⁷⁶ For the following see Bulmer and Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Sciences in the 1920s," 397-399, Earlene Craver, "Patronage and the Directions of Research in Economics: The Rockefeller Foundation in Europe, 1924-1938," *Minerva*, vol. 24 (1986), 211, and Fisher, "The Role of Philanthropic Foundations in the Reproduction and Production of Hegemony," 213-223.

however, hierarchical control on programs was tightened and the RF withdrew from interdisciplinary approaches (through the support to research centers) and focused on specific programs. By 1933, the DSS had shifted its strategic focus on “economic stabilization,” “international relations,” and “community organization and planning,” and thus replaced Ruml’s original interdisciplinary strategy.

Jäckh approached the RF for additional funding after the reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropy. In a now established strategy, Jäckh presented an impressive list of personalities from the academic, diplomatic, and philanthropic worlds supporting his endeavor, and emphasized the international achievements of the DHfP. He argued that “our work and duties” had increased because they were rooted in “the needs of the times and the world, [and were] the creatures of the necessities of a new age and a new world.”¹⁷⁷ In line with the internationalist shift of the School, these tasks focused on international understanding in Europe,¹⁷⁸ and to this end Jäckh requested an annual support of \$30,000 for two years.¹⁷⁹ This time, however, the RF rejected the application,¹⁸⁰ in part because Fehling’s report had stressed the research limits of the DHfP and pointed to the politically controversial nature of some of its programs such as the French-German Exchange of scholars and statesmen.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Edmund E. Day, April 9, 1929, p. 2, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, Rockefeller Foundation (RF) Archives, RAC.

¹⁷⁸ Jäckh listed 5 new international tasks: the Conference for the Scientific Study of International Relations (19 000 M); French-German Exchange (26 000 M); scientific study of problems connected with peace (95 000 M); courses for foreigners in Berlin (12 000 M); courses for teachers in the popular schools and for university extension teachers (14 000 M).

¹⁷⁹ Ernst Jäckh to Edmund E. Day, April 9, 1929, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁰ Edmund E. Day to Ernst Jäckh, May 17, 1929, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸¹ August W. Fehling to Edmund E. Day, May 3, 1928, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

After the rejection, the DHfP's leadership stressed that, with Germany's difficult financial situation, the institute would have to struggle to survive.¹⁸² Hans Simons argued that the DHfP had been planned both as an educational and a research institute since its establishment in 1920. He then claimed that the current crisis had renewed the emergency situation that had warranted the initial support of the LSRM, hence risking limiting the institute's research activities.¹⁸³ Consequentially, he suggested that, without a new grant, the leadership of the DHfP would have to curtail the research work that had been supported by the LSRM grants in order to balance the budget. This time, however, the RF's officers confirmed the application's rejection because of the "restrictions that our program necessarily imposes upon us."¹⁸⁴ This decision reflected a general change in policy that had emerged with the reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropic institutions. In fact, RF officers had criticized Ruml's significant level of independence during the brief existence of the LSRM.¹⁸⁵

Nonetheless, Jäckh's contacts within the RF prolonged the discussions within the Foundation over ways to support the DHfP. In his 1929 application, Jäckh had explicitly mentioned Beardsley Ruml, Raymond Fosdick, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. as references.¹⁸⁶ The vice president of the RF, Thomas B. Appleget recorded in his officer's diary how the application had been forwarded to the president of the RF, Max Mason,

¹⁸² Board of Trustees of DHfP to Rockefeller Foundation, Department of Political Science, March 14, 1930, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸³ Hans Simons to Thomas B. Appleget, July 21, 1930, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁴ Thomas B. Appleget to Hans Simons, August 12, 1930, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See also Edmund E. Day to H. Simons, September 26, 1930, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁵ Martin Bulmer and Joan Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Science in the 1920s: Beardsley Ruml and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, 1922-1929," *Minerva*, vol. 19 (1981), 397-398.

¹⁸⁶ Ernst Jäckh to Edmund E. Day, April 9, 1929, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

through “various references and circumlocutions,” and betraying a certain annoyance concluded, “Certainly no obligation on the RF to make arrangements to consider every interest – many marginal requests will suffer – and should.”¹⁸⁷ The attempt to support the DHfP through the General Education Board failed,¹⁸⁸ and by the end of September the application of the DHfP was definitely rejected because it was “Thoroughly outside program at the present time.”¹⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Jäckh was able to secure a private grant from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. for the year 1931.¹⁹⁰ These developments testify to Jäckh’s remarkable capacity to win the support of individual program officers, in addition to the ability of the DHfP leadership to frame applications for financial support according to the expectation of the RF.

RF officers were caught between program directives and the sympathies for the DHfP. On February 4, 1932, after a dinner conversation with Jäckh and Wolfers, Selskar Gunn (the vice-president of the Foundation in Europe) wrote Day expressing a positive opinion on the DHfP and pointing out, “The essential point seems to be that students of all political fields can mingle in this school and consider political facts in a real objective manner,” yet he noted that the institute was chiefly “devoted to teaching.”¹⁹¹ In his reply, noting that the RF trustees had loosened the research requirements for awarding funds, Day expressed his interest in the DHfP because it was “doing work of far-reaching importance in the development of objective attitudes in international relations.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁷ Thomas B. Appleget Officer’s Diary, March 4, 1930, box 13, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁸ Thomas B. Appleget Officer’s Diary, March 6, 1930, box 13, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas B. Appleget Officer’s Diary, September 25, 1930, box 13, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁰ *Alexander W. Armour Report*, Folder 434, Box 46, RG 2, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Personal Benevolence Records, Rockefeller Family Archives, RAC.

¹⁹¹ Selskar Gunn to Edmund E. Day, February 4, 1932, folder 612, box 76, series 700S, RG 2, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹² Edmund E. Day to Selskar Gunn, February 4, 1932, folder 612, box 76, series 700S, RG 2, RF Archives, RAC.

Against the background of the radicalization of political contrasts in Germany, foundation officers viewed the DHfP as a democratic stronghold and as a center with potential in research in foreign affairs, which was the new focus of the DSS after the reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropy.

Consequently, Gunn met with Jäckh and Wolfers in March of 1932 in Berlin. In a letter to Day, Gunn pointed out, “the orientation is more and more in the direction of research,” although, he continued, this research “could hardly be considered research in the sense that we use the word.” Nonetheless, he identified potential roots for significant future research and – in supporting Jäckh’s application – argued, “One of the most vitally important phases of the whole question is that this Hochschule represents in the best sense of the word a liberal spirit in Germany.”¹⁹³ In April 1932, the RF made a new appropriation to the DHfP.¹⁹⁴

This last grant helped the DHfP to complete its development from an institute devoted to vocational training to a center with academic ambitions and a growing emphasis on research.¹⁹⁵ The course of study was now organized in a curriculum with three stages, that is, the “Pre-Seminar” (1-2 semesters), the “Seminar Department” (4 semesters), and the “Academic Department” (3 semesters). The “Pre-Seminar” had been established in 1931 in order to limit the access to the “Seminar Department” (which until

¹⁹³ Selskar Gunn to Edmund E. Day, March 10/March 15, 1932, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁴ Norma S. Thompson to Ernst Jäckh, April 15, 1932, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁵ For the following see Arnold Wolfers, “Aufbau und Ziele des Hauptlehrganges,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre DHfP*, edited by Ernst Jäckh, 213-222 (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1930/31*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 21, DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1931/32*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 23, DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis SS 1932*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 24, DHfP, *Vorlesungsverzeichnis WS 1932/33*, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 25, and Mitteilung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik über das SS 1932, October 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1110.

then had been free). It is noteworthy that the RF grant helped to establish the “Research Department” in 1932 for which the conservative Fritz Berber served as general secretary. In addition, next to the “Socio-Political Seminar,” the “Civics Seminar,” and the “Geo-Political Seminar,” the DHfP also developed the “Euro-Asian Seminar” (directed by Georg Cleinow), the “*Deutschtumseminar*” (later, “Ethno-Political Seminar,” directed by Max H. Boehm), and the “*Volksbildnerseminar*” (directed by Erwin Marquardt and Sigmund Neumann).¹⁹⁶ By 1932-33, the DHfP had fully developed an academic program, a research department, and several research seminars. At the same time, vocational and practical training, as well as civic education, had been relegated to the special courses.

Over the years, Rockefeller philanthropic institutions substantially supported the DHfP. In 1933, an internal report on the support to the social sciences in Germany categorized the activities of Rockefeller philanthropic institutions (thus adding LSRM grants and RF appropriations) in library grants (\$137,5000), grants to research institutes (\$239,000), grants for support of cooperative research (\$150,000), grants-in-aid to individual scholars (\$4,150), and fellowships (\$300,000). In total, the appropriations amounted to \$830,650.¹⁹⁷ RF officers considered this level of support rather modest,¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ While the Euro-Asian Seminar responded to Cleinow’s interest in Russia as a link between East and West, the *Volksbildnerseminar* continued the educational work that Boehm had started in the framework of the PK and thus focused on the cultural and geographical roots of the German Volk. See The *Volksbildnerseminar* was a seminar based on colloquia and practical exercises for teachers in adult education, continuous training, and vocational training. See Georg Cleinow, “Die eurasischen Probleme als Lehrfach,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 20-33 and Max H. Boehm, “Erziehung zur Deutschtumspolitik,” in *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, edited by Ernst Jäckh (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931), 78-93.

See Sigmund Neumann, “Das Volksbildner-Seminar an der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik,” *Freie Volksbildung*, vol. 12, no. 7 (1932), 452-462. See also Wolfgang Seitter, *Geschichte der Erwachsenenbildung. Eine Einführung* (Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag, 2007).

¹⁹⁷ John Van Sickle, *Report on Rockefeller Foundation Activities in Germany, Social Sciences*, n.d., p. 1. Enclosed in John Van Sickle to Edmund E. Day, June 21, 1933, folder 736, box 93, series 717, RG 2, RF Archives, RAC.

which they related to Germans considering the social sciences a “speculative rather than scientific discipline.”¹⁹⁹ With \$110,000, the DHfP received the largest share among the institutes supported.²⁰⁰ Nonetheless, this support paled in comparison to the total size of Rockefeller philanthropic support to the social sciences. The Memorial alone distributed around \$20 million between 1924 and 1928, of which more than half went to five major centers (Chicago, Columbia, the Brookings Institution, the London School of Economics, and Harvard) and a further one-fifth to the Social Science Research Council.²⁰¹

Both Rockefeller philanthropic institutions and the leadership of the DHfP saw the solution to contentious socio-political issues in “objective” knowledge, yet their approaches significantly differed. In following the tenets of scientific philanthropy, the faith of the LSRM in the social sciences was grounded in the belief that objective research was apolitical and could support the “objective” policy decisions of a professional class of experts. In short, it aimed to replace the divisive politician with the objective policy-maker. By contrast, the leadership of the DHfP doubted that political society could be de-politicized. The emphasis on objective facts and knowledge was part of the “politics of civility,” which required the individual to participate in the political process and learn to respect the political adversary. The goal of the study of politics therefore was the development of a “mature political will” through knowledge and

¹⁹⁸ John Van Sickle, *Report on Rockefeller Foundation Activities in Germany, Social Sciences*, n.d., p. 1. Enclosed in John Van Sickle to Edmund E. Day, June 21, 1933, folder 736, box 93, series 717, RG 2, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁹ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Social Science in Germany*, August 9, 1932, p. 8, folder 186, box 20, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁰⁰ The other institutes were the Hamburg Institute of International Affairs (\$20,000), *Institut für Sozial und Staatswissenschaften*, Heidelberg (\$60,000), *Institut für Weltwirtschaft und Seeverkehr*, University of Kiel (\$46,000), and the *Institut für Gesellschafts und Wirtschaftswissenschaften*, Bonn (\$3,000). John Van Sickle, *Report on Rockefeller Foundation Activities in Germany, Social Sciences*, n.d., p. 2. Enclosed in John Van Sickle to Edmund E. Day, June 21, 1933, folder 736, box 93, series 717, RG 2, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁰¹ Bulmer and Bulmer, “Philanthropy and Social Sciences in the 1920s,” 385-386.

understanding of political facts and processes, rather than the collection of “empirical data” that could support policy-making. The two approaches were not irreconcilable, yet in Germany’s radicalized public sphere knowledge and expertise could serve both to bolster specific socio-political interests and to bypass political institutions in the name of an alleged *Überparteilichkeit*, as the acrimonious debates between the young conservatives and the leadership of the DHfP had shown.

Conclusions

The leaders of the CEIP and of Rockefeller philanthropic institutions were internationalists who were aware of the broader social, political, and economic interconnections of the post-war world. Accordingly, they viewed their philanthropic efforts as a key part of a semi-official cultural diplomacy that in part balanced and in part compensated the isolationism of official American foreign policy. As the visits of Babcock and Butler in Berlin show, foundation officers and trustees had access to the highest echelons of German political society, thus testifying to the awareness among German elites of the key political role of U.S. philanthropic institutions. Conversely, aware of their roles, foundation officers tried to avoid politically controversial positions by either limiting, in the case of the LSRM and the RF, their work to the safety of “objective” social science or, after initial controversies, selecting local representatives who were well connected to the official political leadership, as in the case of the CEIP. In both cases, therefore, political, scientific, and diplomatic considerations played a role in these philanthropic institutions’ activities in inter-war Germany.

The influence of philanthropic foundations depended on their peculiar position in American society. Indeed, foundations played a crucial socio-political role by linking

academic research, business, and government. Nicholas M. Butler exemplified this peculiar role by being close to the Republican Party (which considered him for the position of Vice-President), representing academia as President of Columbia University, and being part of the CEIP leadership. The intellectuals at the center of this study played a similar role in German society, as they were strategically placed at the critical intersection of the actions of philanthropists, academic theorists, and government officials. Consequently, Jäckh and his associates were ideal partners for American foundations because they were able to establish connections with the worlds of academia and politics.

The working relation between American philanthropic foundations and the circle around Jäckh thus was, by the nature of this relationship, highly political. Both foundation officers and German intellectuals entered this collaboration with clear goals in mind, which at times overlapped and other times clearly diverged. On the one hand, therefore, the relationship between American philanthropy and the DHfP developed around a clear asymmetry between American internationalist and democratic ideals and the realities of German political culture, as the case of the CEIP shows. On the other hand, however, the Rockefeller support to research programs had a paradoxical impact on the development of the School of Politics and its role in Germany's contentious public sphere.

By the second half of the 1920s, the leadership of the DHfP clearly voiced the internationalist goals of their institute. In truth, the restoration of state's power had been the explicit goal of the DHfP since its founding days, as the repeated references to the French *Ecole libre* had shown. In the 1920s, the liberal leaders of the School remained

anchored to a Naumannian approach that rooted an energetic foreign policy in internal strength and solidarity. Only the stabilization of the republic had therefore created the preconditions for an effective foreign policy that aimed to revise the Versailles Treaty. Consequentially, this reality modified the task of the DHfP. The internationalism of the DHfP aimed to insert Germany and its intellectual elites in the international community and make them equal participants in discussions on a stable European peace. U.S. philanthropic foundations were important tools for these efforts.

The diatribe between the CEIP and its German Special Correspondents points to the difficulties of American foundations to identify reliable partners in Germany's contentious public sphere. The reports of Foerster and Gerlach had drawn the attention of the leadership of the Division of Intercourse and Education to the nationalism of Jäckh and his associates. Paradoxically, however, political consideration convinced Butler, Babcock, and Haskell to downgrade their association with the outspoken Foerster. They viewed Foerster's criticism as a politically liability for the Endowment's work in Germany despite his unquestionable democratic credentials. The correspondence of Butler and Babcock shows that the leadership of the CEIP was concerned with negative political consequences of their association with Foerster. In addition, however, it also suggests that Foerster's and Gerlach's marginal role in Germany constituted a key obstacle in the eyes of the CEIP for the development of programs with a clear and long-term impact on the development of German political opinion.

By contrast, the LSRM sought out institutions that could foster the development of empiric approaches to the social sciences in the hope that objective research would deradicalize political discourse. Paradoxically, Rockefeller officers initially supported the

DHfP more out of political than scholarly reasons. While pointing out the limited quality of the research conducted at the School of Politics, officers viewed the DHfP as an expression of the liberal spirit of the “New Germany,” which thus deserved sympathy and support. In the long term, however, Rockefeller philanthropy influenced the School’s development, which restructured its programs and emphasized the research and academic units because of the need for American financial support. Combined with political elites’ growing influence on the School, which will be described in the following chapter, these developments facilitated conservative scholars’ penetration in the DHfP.

Paradoxically, Jäckh’s fundraising skills also facilitated the development of these asymmetries. The numerous interactions of the DHfP leadership with American economic, political, and philanthropic elites had helped them to identify the priorities of U.S. philanthropic foundations. By analyzing his correspondence with U.S. philanthropic institutions, it clearly emerges that Jäckh had initially shaped his applications for Rockefeller grants on his earlier experience with the CEIP. Only when he became aware of the LSRM’s emphasis on research, Jäckh abandoned the initial approach. Consequentially, he emphasized the similarities between the DHfP and other research-intensive institutions supported by the LSRM such as the LSE. As a result, the DHfP leadership emphasized its research programs, which were increasingly developed with the help of Rockefeller grants.

The case of the LSRM and of the RF points to the difficulties to export the American faith in objective, non-partisan public policy to Germany’s contentious public sphere. The emphasis on social sciences expressed the hope in the possibility that objective research could provide policy-makers with undisputable data and thus bypass

the factionalism of politics of a modern mass-democracy. The case of the DHfP, however, shows the dangers of an absolute faith in a culture of experts when policy decisions are not sustained by ethical, democratic values. The acrimonious debates between the DHfP and the PK described in previous chapters show that the expert and the nonpartisan policy maker could serve not only to veil particular socio-political objective but also to bypass those democratic intermediary institutions that by institutionalizing conflict guarantee political pluralism. This and the following chapter show how the gradual emphasis on research in international relations provided an “objective” and “nonpartisan” platform on which right-wing scholars could be integrated into the School of Politics.

The impact of the policies of American philanthropic foundations, however, should not be overemphasized. Admittedly, in these decades, foundations had an influence on social, political, and economic developments in the United States that would remain unmatched in the decades to come.²⁰² Nonetheless, quite naturally, scholars risk overemphasizing the role of philanthropic organizations when putting them at the center of historical enquiries.²⁰³ The policies of American foundations were only one factor that contributed to the conservative shift of the German School of Politics in the last ten years of the Weimar Republic. The domestic politics and the paradoxical modernity of civil society, which will be discussed in the following chapter, play a crucial role in the end of the DHfP and epitomized the withering of a conception of civil society rooted in civility in the last years of Germany’s first democracy.

²⁰² Hammack and Anheier, *A Versatile Institution*, 43-74.

²⁰³ Lucy Bernholz, “The Future of Foundation History: Suggestions for Research,” in *Philanthropic Foundations: New Scholarship, New Possibilities*, edited by Ellen Condliffe Lagermann (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 360-361.

CHAPTER 6: FROM CIVIL SOCIETY TO DICTATORSHIP: PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS BETWEEN REPUBLIC, NAZISM, AND EXILE

The mid-1920s were the golden years of the Weimar Republic. Germany's young democracy appeared to have survived the combined pressures of extremists' attacks, economic crisis and hyperinflation, and foreign military presence. In this new context, political society gradually integrated into the political system parties that had initially opposed the republican state. In particular, the DVP accepted political responsibility by participating in governments, and thus renounced its stance of radical opposition to republican politics.¹ Furthermore, under the energetic leadership of the DVP politician Gustav Stresemann, the Foreign Office broke Germany's international isolation, hence facilitating Germany's reintegration into the international community.² Parliamentary democracy thus seemed to have set roots in Germany.

Private philanthropy had guaranteed the political independence of the DHfP in the first half of the 1920s. After contributing to the establishment of the School, however, German philanthropists gradually withdrew their support in the conviction that it was the task of political institutions to guarantee the survival of Germany's first school of public affairs. In line with a peculiar German tradition, private initiatives had a complementary role to state action. After failing to attract additional private funds, the leadership of the DHfP sought the support of Germany's political elites. To this end, the DHfP started a working cooperation with the PK in order to broaden its cross-partisan appeal.

Symbolically, the cooperation between the DHfP and the PK paralleled the attempt of political elites to co-opt conservative parties to the political process. The relative stabilization of political society had renewed the hope that political forces and

¹ Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933*, 195-237

² Elz, "Foreign Policy," in *Weimar Germany*, 61-67.

social strata that had previously opposed the republican form of government could be integrated into the system through compromise and the sharing of (political) responsibility. This approach also indirectly signaled that liberal elites – and among them the DHfP leadership – believed that a genuine democratic spirit was developing in Germany. From this perspective, the celebration of a democratic “New Germany” was a celebration of the DHfP. The faith in the possibility to successfully integrate all political forces into the republican state assumed the development of a sense of political responsibility, commitment to the common good, and willingness to compromise, which were civil society’s foundational blocks.

The integration of adversarial political forces and the involvement of political institutions, however, inevitably paved the path to the penetration of party politics in the DHfP. The new emphasis on *Überparteilichkeit* – in the sense of equal distance from (or presence of) all political positions – testifies to the conviction of Jäckh and his associates that the DHfP had fulfilled its domestic tasks. Only trusting the development of a general democratic mindset could justify the faith in political institutions’ stability and in their capacity to integrate all political forces. The inability of the leadership of the DHfP to successfully cooperate with the conservative scholars of the PK epitomized, however, the ephemeral nature of the republic’s consolidation and the withering of civil society. Several conservative faculty members of PK remained at the DHfP, although the cooperation between the two institutes ended in 1930. By the early 1930s, therefore, the DHfP counted as faculty members some of the intellectuals that had formed the circle around Moeller-Bruck in the aftermath of World War One.

In the last five years of the republic, the DHfP became the venue for debates over the future of the parliamentary system and the limits of a conception of civil society rooted in civility. The debates between the conservative Carl Schmitt and the Social Democrat Hermann Heller on the legitimacy and justification of political authority epitomized the broader tension between contrasting conceptions of societal organization. Within the DHfP, Heller was one of the last voices defending a form of societal organization grounded in civility, tolerance, and pluralism. By contrast, often drawing explicitly on Schmitt, conservative political and intellectual elites viewed authoritarian forms of government as the solution to Germany's problems because of their ability to bypass those intermediary organizations that institutionalized conflicts. Even the liberal leadership of the DHfP saw a needed counterforce to political society's factionalism in a strong head of state, as Max Weber, Friedrich Meinecke, and Friedrich Naumann had done during the crisis-ridden years after World War One.

Ernst Jäckh personified the limits and risks of a conception of civil society rooted in acceptance of conflict, compromise, and negotiation. In Germany's radicalized public sphere of the early 1930s, a liberal conception of civil society was unable to defend Weimar's parliamentary democracy against powerful, alternative forms of societal organization. The trust in political institutions' stability, the readiness to compromise, and the confidence in rational argumentation led to a passive stance towards the National Socialist movement. Like most of the conservative-oriented liberals of the time, Jäckh viewed the authoritarian political turn under the chancellors Heinrich Brüning and Franz von Papen as necessary to secure state's authority against a deadlocked parliament. After the seizure of power of the Nazis, Jäckh failed to maintain control over the DHfP,

notwithstanding his willingness to make numerous concessions to the new regime.

Nonetheless, he continued to seek influence in Germany's political society from exile and spent the rest of his life in an egotistical attempt to present himself and his venture as an uncompromised democratic bulwark.

Accordingly, in this chapter I detail the process by which a liberal conception of civil society paved the path to alternative forms of societal organization. Therefore, I first analyze the cooperation between the DHfP and the PK. The integration of conservative scholars and the influence of public funds symbolized the progressive penetration of party politics in the DHfP and pointed to the general faith in the stability of political institution. Secondly, I point out the limits of the civil society discourse. Against the background of the socio-political crisis of the early 1930s, the liberal leadership of the DHfP gradually turned to authoritarian forms of government and viewed a strengthened political leadership as the only way out of social and political fragmentation. Lastly, Ernst Jäckh serves as a vantage point on the activities of German public intellectuals between accommodation and emigration in the 1930s. Jäckh's ambivalences toward the Nazi regime were rooted in his liberal nationalism but, most importantly, pointed to the limits of a conception of civil society based on compromise and civility when confronted with powerful political alternatives.

The DHfP and Party Politics

Jäckh and his associates celebrated the "New Germany" and pointed out the successful democratization of Germany's political system and society. The stabilization of the republic confirmed their trust in the co-opting capacities of democratic institutions. Furthermore, the integration into the political system of conservative politicians, whose

initial attitude toward the new state had been, if not of outright rejection, of skepticism at best, validated the emphasis of these intellectuals on responsibility and reason. By the mid-1920s, therefore, the leadership of the DHfP could legitimately celebrate the domestic successes of their institute and turn to foreign policy objectives.

Jäckh viewed political stabilization as a proof of Germany's strong democratic roots and of the successful democratization of both political system and society. He argued that the Weimar Constitution "incarnated" the spirit of the real Germany, which was the "fruit" of the revolution of 1848.³ In contrast to the immediate post-war period, Jäckh now clearly contrasted this democratic Germany to Imperial Germany, whose traditional elites, militarism, void parliamentarism, and monarchic system had blocked democracy's development.⁴ Jäckh therefore pointed to a familiar theme among liberal democrats, who had attempted to legitimize the new republic by highlighting Germany's democratic past. In so doing, he rooted current problems in a peculiar path that diverted from Germany's democratic past, as well as from the political development of Anglo-Saxon nations. The narrative of the "New Germany" therefore foreshadowed the *Sonderweg* thesis of the aftermath of World War Two.

Against the background of the Republic's stabilization, Jäckh considered the integration of parties in the political system as complete. The new republic had successfully fought against attacks from both the left and the right,⁵ and now, he optimistically concluded, the large majority of Germans supported the young

³ Ernst Jäckh, "The Spirit of the New Germany," *The Survey*, vol. 61 (1929), 551 and Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 39.

⁴ Jäckh, "The Spirit of the New Germany," 552 and Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 59.

⁵ Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 33.

democracy.⁶ Gustav Stresemann personified this new Germany because he had abandoned old ambiguities “under the experience of responsibility.”⁷ Likewise, President Paul von Hindenburg was “the best example of education in responsibility by facts.”⁸ Indeed, Jäckh asserted that, “Education by facts and responsibility to a new spirit is a characteristic feature of the majority in the new Germany, among leaders and among the people.”⁹ Political responsibility and the involvement in the political process – the praxis of politics – had had the upper hand against the doctrinism and irrationalism of slogans and propaganda, hence validating the approach of the DHfP. Jäckh’s analysis voiced liberals’ trust in the ability of republican institutions and, in particular, of the political process to neutralize what they deemed irrational political approaches.

Nonetheless, at the same time, the leadership of the School faced a significant decrease of private financial support. Consequently, Jäckh and his associates multiplied their efforts to secure new sources of funding and, in seeking public funds, turned to Germany’s political leadership. The growing involvement of Weimar’s political class, however, led the DHfP to officially cooperate with the PK. This agreement mirrored the simultaneous attempt of the republic’s political leadership to counter the fragmentation of Germany’s middle class parties and to integrate conservative parties into the political process.

⁶ Jäckh, “The Spirit of the New Germany,” 551-553.

⁷ Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 51.

⁸ Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 53.

⁹ Jäckh, *The New Germany*, 56.

Private support for the DHfP had rapidly dwindled. By the end of 1925, the School was unable to cover all its expenses with private donations.¹⁰ The leadership of the School noted,

After the collapse [of 1918], the establishment of this School was regarded as a valuable experiment for which a number of private individuals provided considerable resources. With the success of the experiment, the usual opinion developed in the circles that had financially supported the School that it would be now the task of Reich and state [that is, Prussia] to take over the expenses of the institution.¹¹

Significantly, the leadership linked the falling of private donations to a peculiar attitude of German philanthropists. German philanthropy had traditionally assumed a role that was complementary to the one of the state.¹² The case of the DHfP therefore conforms to a peculiar German pattern of state-philanthropy relationships.

Consequently, the Board of Trustees of the DHfP sought new sources of financial support. In the name of the Board, Walter Simons (President of the Court of Justice and former Reich Foreign Minister) contacted both the Office of the Chancellor and President von Hindenburg.¹³ Emblematically, in writing the political leadership regarding financial support, Simons emphasized that the DHfP had relied on private funds during its first five years of existence, during which it had only received non-

¹⁰ Walter Simons to Paul von Hindenburg, November 18, 1925, p. 2, BArch, R43-I/773.

¹¹ DHfP to preussische Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung, October 3, 1928, p. 1, BArch, R4901/1445.

¹² See for example Annette Zimmer, "Corporatism Revisited. The Legacy of History and the German Nonprofit Sector," *Voluntas*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1999), 37-49 and Helmut K. Anheier and Wolfgang Seibel, "Defining the Nonprofit Sector: Germany," *Working Papers of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project*, no. 6. (1993).

¹³ Walter Simons to Hans Luther, November 9, 1925, BArch, R43-I/773, Walter Simons to Hans Luther, November 18, 1925, BArch, R43-I/773, and Walter Simons to Paul von Hindenburg, November 18, 1925, BArch, R43-I/773.

monetary support from state and federal agencies.¹⁴ In so doing, Simons also stressed the complementary relationship between private philanthropy and public funds, although he did so out of necessity.

The leadership of the DHfP justified the request for public funds by pointing out the crucial role of political education in Germany's young democracy and the cross-partisanship of the School. Hans Simons stressed the need to counter the "political propaganda, the devious tactics, and the bogus idealism" with political knowledge and political commitment. In fact, he continued, a school of politics had a crucial task in a period in which party programs and methods of government were easily confounded.¹⁵ Likewise, his father Walter Simons stressed the role of the DHfP in overcoming political contrasts, deepening political knowledge, and strengthening the political sense of responsibility by including students of all political perspectives in its seminars,¹⁶ and thus highlighted the School's contribution to political cooperation and sense of responsibility.¹⁷

The appropriation of public funds, however, increased the influence of political elites on the School. The Office of the President discussed the political repercussions of Simons's request for financial support with the Chancellery. Significantly, it was decided to appropriate a one-time grant because Prussia's attempt to gain control over the composition of the DHfP faculty made "an intervention of the Chancellor desirable."¹⁸

The parliamentary debates in the spring of 1931 would confirm the politicization of the

¹⁴ Walter Simons to Hans Luther, November 18, 1925, pp. 1-2, BArch, R43-I/773 and Walter Simons to Paul von Hindenburg, November 18, 1925, pp. 1-2, BArch, R43-I/773.

¹⁵ Hans Simons to Carl H. Becker, August 1, 1925, p. 2, BArch, R4901/1445.

¹⁶ Walter Simons to Hans Luther, November 18, 1925, p. 2, BArch, R43-I/773.

¹⁷ Walter Simons to Paul von Hindenburg, November 18, 1925, p. 1, BArch, R43-I/773.

¹⁸ Der Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei, Rk. 8308, November 24, 1925, pp. 1-3, BArch, R43-I/773.

appropriation of public funds to the DHfP. Numerous parties voted against a new appropriation of 100,000 M from the Ministry of the Interior.¹⁹ Opposition parties decried the “arrogance” of academics and suggested alternative uses for these funds,²⁰ although the democratic supporters of the DHfP defended the grant.²¹ Jäckh could only express concern for the cuts of public funds and stress the vital role of the DHfP in developing courses in civic education.²²

The particular standing of the DHfP in post-war Germany had been rooted in Jäckh’s ability to insulate the School from party politics. During the opening ceremony, speakers had celebrated the School as a “free” endeavor, which was politically independent because it was outside the regular academic system. Private philanthropy had therefore guaranteed the freedom and independence of the DHfP in its first years of existence. Although close to the DDP, the major donor of the DHfP, Robert Bosch, never played a leading political role like the main supporter of the PK, Alfred Hugenberg, who became the chairman of the DNVP in 1928. In the second half of the 1920s, the decline of private funds therefore threatened the independence of the DHfP and public funds translated into an increased politicization of the DHfP, although the support from U.S. foundations guaranteed a certain level of independence.

Against this background, the DHfP and the PK started to officially cooperate in 1927. This, Martin Spahn later claimed, allowed the DHfP to justify the appropriation of public funds.²³ The negotiations between Hans Simons and Spahn focused on the

¹⁹ Der Stattssekretär in der Reichskanzlei, Rk. 2284, February 26, 1931, BArch, R43-I/782.

²⁰ *Reichstagprotokoll*, 34. Sitzung, March 2, 1931, p. 1294 and *Reichstagprotokoll*, 36. Sitzung, March 4, 1931, p. 1348. Available at <http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de>

²¹ *Reichstagprotokoll*, 34. Sitzung, March 2, 1931, pp. 1305-1306. Available at <http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de>

²² Ernst Jäckh to Hermann Pünder, May 20, 1931, p. 1, BArch, R43-I/782.

²³ Martin Spahn to Joseph Wirth, May 9, 1930, p. 2, BArch, R118/28.

composition of the new Board of Directors and of the Faculty Council, as well as on the involvement of PK faculty in the activities of the DHfP.²⁴ Organizationally, they agreed that the two institutes would share the same rooms, and that the DHfP would publicize the PK activities in its bulletins and involve the PK faculty in its activities.²⁵ In addition, the negotiators agreed that the DHfP would support the application of the PK when applying for public funds.²⁶ Finally, Spahn and Otto Hoetzsch joined the Faculty Council, and two members of the DNVP and a third “trust man” became members of the new Board of Trustees.²⁷ The regular communications between Spahn and Reinhold Quaatz – a leading politician of the DNVP and close to Hugenberg – testified to the interest of conservative political circles in the negotiations between the two institutes.²⁸

The cooperation between DHfP and PK epitomized the difficulties – and resulting ambivalences – of Germany’s liberal elites in integrating conservative groups into the political process. The leadership of the DHfP remained ambivalent toward Spahn and his associates, yet it sought to broaden the School’s cross-partisan appeal by cooperating with the PK. In a private letter to Arnold Wolfers, Hans Simons argued that, by keeping the connection with the PK looser than originally planned, it would be possible to gain the necessary influence on the PK without getting involved in its political activities.²⁹

These hopes to influence the young conservatives of the PK paralleled the attempt of

²⁴ *Aufzeichnungen über die Unterredung mit Ministerialrat Simons am 9.VII.1927*. Enclosed in Martin Spahn to Reinhold Quaatz, July 13, 1927, BArch, R118/28.

²⁵ *Abkommen zwischen der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik und dem Politischen Kolleg zur Schaffung einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft angeboten 1927*, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Solger, F., Nr. 164.

²⁶ *Abkommen zwischen der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik und dem Politischen Kolleg zur Schaffung einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft angeboten 1927*, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Solger, F., Nr. 164.

²⁷ *Abkommen zwischen der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik und dem Politischen Kolleg zur Schaffung einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft angeboten 1927*, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Solger, F., Nr. 164.

²⁸ Reinhold Quaatz to Martin Spahn, May 25, 1927, BArch, R 118/28.

²⁹ Hans Simons to Arnold Wolfers, August 25, 1927, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 45.

Weimar's political society to integrate into the political process parties and social strata that had initially opposed the republican form of government.

The new composition of the Board of Trustees revealed the increased role of politics within the DHfP. The Board had been established in 1923-24 and, during its existence, would count in total nine or ten members from the DDP, seven from the SPD, seven from the Bavarian People's Party (BVP), four from the DNVP, three from the DVP, and one from the Reich Party of the German Middle Class (WP).³⁰ Its reorganization in 1927-28 confirmed the enhanced role of political elites in the School; a development that paralleled the cooperation with the PK and the appropriation of public funds. In fact, only three out of nineteen new members were not directly active in politics.³¹ While during the first two years, representatives from several ministries had personified the connection between the DHfP and political institutions, the new Board of Trustees emblematically testified – in its attempt to balance political representation – to the penetration of party politics in the School.

The cooperation with the PK and the integration of conservative scholars into the DHfP signaled a significant change in the attitude of Jäckh and his associates. In the aftermath of World War One, they had conceptualized *Überparteilichkeit* as a political ethos, which made the working of a liberal democracy possible. Slowly, however, the original emphasis on the training of a new democratic leadership paved the path to a

³⁰ Mielke, *Einzigartig*, 11.

³¹ The new members were: Emil Berndt (DNVP), Otto Braun (SPD), Johann Viktor Bredt (WP), Carl Duisberg (IG Farben), Wilhelm Kahl (DVP), Ludwig Kastl (executive director of the Federal Organization of German Industry and delegate at the negotiations on the Dawes-Plan and on the Young-Plan), Eduard Hamm (DDP), Hermann Kuenzer (Liberal Union), Hugo von Lerchenfeld (BVP), Wilhelm Marx (Catholic Center Party), Franz von Mendelssohn (banker), Carl Petersen (DDP), Erich Pritwitz-Gaffron (member of the Advisory Council of the European Bureau of the CEIP), Reinhold Quaatz (DNVP), Werner Richter (SPD), Friedrich Saemisch (close to the DVP), Oswald Oskar Schneider (close to Gustav Stresemann), Georg Schreiber (Catholic Center Party), and Carl Severing (SPD).

more inclusive understanding of *Überparteilichkeit*. The leadership of the DHfP used the cooperation with the PK as a proof of its enhanced cross-partisanship. Emblematically, when requesting a contribution from the Prussian Ministry of Education, Hans Simons asserted that with the cooperation with the PK “it has been conclusively carried out the de facto integration of all parties into the School.”³² This cooperation points to a shift in the understanding of *Überparteilichkeit*, which now referred to an equal presence of political parties and ideological perspectives in the institute. This shift epitomized a more general weakness of the Weimar coalition parties. As Dietrich Orlow has argued for the case of Prussia, candidates ran not on party labels but as representatives of nonpartisan coalitions, which usually veiled combinations of various bourgeois parties, thus pointing to their lack of “vertical depth.”³³

The PK clear political orientation caused contrasts about both the use of public funds and organizational cooperation. At the end of 1927, the Ministry of the Interior had granted M 120,000 to the DHfP.³⁴ Out of this sum, the PK received a one-time contribution of M 50,000.³⁵ Spahn thus applied for additional funds and protested against the alleged lack of cooperation by the DHfP.³⁶ However, the Ministry of the Interior perceived the close relationship between the PK and the DNVP as an obstacle for the appropriation of public funds.³⁷ At the same time, Hans Simons repeatedly protested the absence of references to the cooperation between the two institutes in the bulletins that

³² Hans Simons to preussischer Minister für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung, November 14, 1927, p. 3, BArch, R4901/1445.

³³ Orlow, *Weimar Prussia, 1925-1933*, 30.

³⁴ Reichministerium des Innern to DHfP, December 8, 1927, BArch, R1501/125661.

³⁵ Martin Spahn to Hans Simons, April 21, 1928, BArch, R118/28, Hans Simons to Martin Spahn, April 24, 1928, BArch, R118/28, and Hans Simons to Martin Spahn, April 24, 1928, BArch, R118/28.

³⁶ Martin Spahn to Staatssekretär Otto Meißner, February 14, 1929, BArch, R1501/125661, Hans Simons to Ministerialrat Werner Hoche, February 21, 1929, BArch, R1501/125661, and Hans Simons to Werner Hoche, March 7, 1929, BArch, R1501/125661.

³⁷ Ministerium des Innern, Vermerk, November 5, 1928, BArch, R1501/125661.

the PK regularly published.³⁸ Thus, tensions punctuated the cooperation between the two institutes from the beginning.

More importantly, the acrimonious debates that had involved the PK and the DHfP in the immediate aftermath of the war were now replicated within this working relationship. The conservative members of the PK attacked the pro-republican attitude of the DHfP and, as the only program explicitly supporting the democratic state, the “Civics Seminar” was inevitably at the center of these attacks. An unsigned article published in the conservative magazine *Der Tag* accused that, besides some few concessions to the right, the lecturers of the “Civics Seminar” were “more or less known propagandists” of the left.³⁹ A few days later, Spahn reported additional complaints about the lack of “objectivity” and the discrimination against the right in the courses of the DHfP in a letter to Hans Simons.⁴⁰ In addition, Kleo Pleyer recounted the hesitations of a “conservatively-minded father” to send his son to the “Civics Seminar.”⁴¹ In reaction to these attacks, Johann Strunz stressed the cross-partisanship of the “Civics Seminar,”⁴² whereas Simons pointed out that civic education courses for young teachers by definition supported the republican state.⁴³

The Board of Trustees of the DHfP ended its cooperation with the PK in the summer of 1930. Declaring his agreement with the decision, the Reich Interior Minister Joseph Wirth saw the reasons of the break in the political positions of the PK, whose activities had focused on “certain right-oriented circles,” had excluded the DHfP, and had

³⁸ Hans Simons to Martin Spahn, October 12, 1928, BAArch, R 118/28 and Hans Simons to Martin Spahn, 27 April 1929, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 Nr. 176.

³⁹ “Hochschule für Partei-Politik?” *Der Tag*, 19 March 1929, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 Nr. 176.

⁴⁰ Martin Spahn to Hans Simons, March 23, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 176.

⁴¹ Kleo Pleyer to Johann Strunz, May 10, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 166.

⁴² Johann Strunz to Kleo Pleyer, May 11, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303, Nr. 166.

⁴³ Hans Simons to Martin Spahn, March 28, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303 Nr. 176.

involved personalities who were known for their opposition to the government.⁴⁴ Wirth referred to Spahn's old associate Eduard Stadtler, who after his exclusion from the "June-Club" had gravitated toward the *Stahlhelm*, which was a paramilitary organization close to the DNVP. In public speeches, Stadtler had compared the republican state to a "dung pile,"⁴⁵ and had allegedly called for a "national revolution" that would overthrow the government, which he described as "the enemy" of the people.⁴⁶

The ensuing negotiations between Spahn and the DHfP leadership evolved around the notion of *Überparteilichkeit*. Spahn bewailed that the Board of Trustees had ended the relationship between the two institutes in the absence of representatives of the political right. Furthermore, he accused the DHfP of "political one-sidedness" and argued that Stadtler's involvement in the activities of the PK had responded to the attempt to give space to all political perspectives.⁴⁷ The Board eventually decided to hire Spahn and Pleyer, offer a temporary position to Karl Hoffmann, and provide Spahn with the necessary funds to cover the costs resulting from ending the cooperation.⁴⁸ In addition, Adolf Grabowsky, Max H. Boehm, and Georg Cleinow remained associated with the DHfP as directors of research seminars. Significantly, the leadership of the DHfP insisted on the presence of representatives of the DNVP on the Board of Trustees, thus

⁴⁴ Joseph Wirth to Martin Spahn, May 5, 1930, pp. 2-3, BArch, R 118/28

⁴⁵ Generalstaatsanwalt to Preussischer Justizminister, December 13, 1928, GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 84a, Nr. 54143. Indicted through the Law for the Protection of the Republic, Stadtler successfully argued that his statements had been wrongfully reported and a lower court acquitted him. Upon the appeal of the public prosecutor, however, a second court revised the earlier ruling and fined Stadtler. Schoeffengericht zu Gollnow, Urteil, Geschaeftsnummer 2 M. J. 2089/28, January 31, 1929, GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 84a, Nr. 54143 and Landgericht in Stargerd, Urteil, Geschaeftsnummer 2 M. J. 2089/28, March 28, 1929, GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 84a, Nr. 54143.

⁴⁶ Transcript of Stadtler's Speech, p. 11. Enclosed in Generalstaatsanwalt to Preussischer Justizminister, January 31, 1929, GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 84a, Nr. 55155.

⁴⁷ Martin Spahn to Joseph Wirth, May 9, 1930, BArch, R 118/28. In an earlier draft of this letter, Spahn had also explicitly decried the lack of *Überparteilichkeit* at the DHfP. Politische Kolleg, Entwurf. An den Herrn Reichsminister des Innerns, May 9, 1930, p. 3, BArch, R 118/23/Heft 5.

⁴⁸ *Protokoll der Kuratoriumssitzung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, n.d., pp. 2-3, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1103.

confirming the importance of preserving an equal presence of all political parties in the leading organ of the School.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, Quaatz protested the decision to end the cooperation, argued that the DHfP was abandoning an inclusive, nonpartisan education, and – in protest – renounced his seat on the Board.⁵⁰

These developments paralleled the progressive involvement of U.S. philanthropic foundations with the DHfP. To a certain degree, therefore, the School's outward projected image of being a democratic stronghold did not reflect the increasing influence of conservatives within its ranks and liberals' growing skepticism toward the parliamentary system. At the same time, the DHfP gradually shifted from being an institute devoted to vocational training and civic education to an academic center that emphasized research and foreign affairs. American grants made this transformation possible, which initially reflected the School's leadership conviction that its domestic objectives had been successfully fulfilled. From this perspective, the cooperation with the PK testified to liberals' trust in the stability of political institutions and the belief that anti-parliamentary forces could be successfully integrated in the political process.

Against the background of a new radicalization of the socio-political conflicts in the late 1920s, the public intellectuals associated with the DHfP again multiplied their efforts to address Germany's crisis, as they had done during the war and in its immediate aftermath. Hans Simons and Carl H. Becker were part of the leadership of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation, which was initiated by the Rockefeller Foundation and soon developed as a private initiative that complemented the efforts of federal agencies to

⁴⁹ Arnold Wolfers to Kleo Pleyer, June 6, 1930, BArch, R 118/23/ Heft 4 and Kleo Pleyer to Arnold Wolfers, June 18, 1930, BArch, R 118/23/Heft 4.

⁵⁰ *Protokoll der Kuratoriumssitzung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, n.d., GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1103.

support a genuinely democratic spirit in Germany.⁵¹ In addition, Jäckh became the driving force behind the establishment of a Stresemann Memorial Foundation and a Peace Academy, which confirmed the gradual turn toward research and international relations of the leadership of the German School of Politics.

The Abraham Lincoln Foundation relied on the work and support of many of the personalities that had been involved with the DHfP. In fact, Becker became president of the foundation and a Presidential Committee appointed Hans Simons and Reinhold Schairer as executive directors. With the help of around one hundred confidential advisers throughout Germany and committees of selection, Simons and Schairer identified and supported gifted persons who, because of the difficulties of the times, were not able to fully develop their potential.⁵² The list of confidential advisers included Bäumer, Bergstraesser, Bonn, Haas, Heller, Hoetzsch, Mennicke, and Walter Simons and thus confirmed the involvement of numerous personalities associated with the DHfP.⁵³

Although initially an American project, the Abraham Lincoln Foundation soon became a German endeavor. The LSRM had appointed Geoffrey W. Young to study the development of the humanities in Europe. In October 1926, Young had submitted his study with a proposal to establish a foundation in Germany that aimed to support potential future leaders in the humanities.⁵⁴ The Executive Committee of the LSRM put thirty thousand dollars at Young's disposal for a three-year period, but stressed that the new organization should be "an indigenous one" and hence insisted on the Memorial's

⁵¹ For a full account of the history and background of the Abraham Lincoln Stiftung see Malcolm Richardson, Jürgen Reulecke, and Frank Trommler, eds., *Weimars transatlantischer Mäzen: die Lincoln-Stiftung 1927 bis 1934. Ein Versuch demokratischer Elitenförderung in der Weimarer Republik* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2008).

⁵² *Project History*, n.d., folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁵³ *Mitglieder des Vertrauenskreises*, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁵⁴ *Project History*, n.d., folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

“complete anonymity.”⁵⁵ Nonetheless, the founding committee decided to acknowledge the American support as well as the intention of the new organization by naming it after Abraham Lincoln.⁵⁶

Simons and Schairer were able to impose their organizational approach, notwithstanding Young’s energetic leadership style.⁵⁷ Simons and Schairer explicitly favored a flexible style based on informal contacts.⁵⁸ They argued that this approach was valuable because, with the weakening of Germany’s social fabric, there was a “particular readiness to make trials of new ideas, and a greater eagerness to uncover new forces and new social forms.”⁵⁹ Consequently, they asserted the need to support talented individuals who “are the better able to accommodate themselves to serving society,”⁶⁰ and whose work was of “practical and profitable service to the community.”⁶¹ The leadership of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation aimed to support individuals who had a natural attitude for the engagement for the broader community. The goals of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation therefore paralleled the efforts of the DHfP.

Like the DHfP, the Abraham Lincoln Foundation developed at the critical intersection between private and public initiatives. The explicit aim of the foundation was

⁵⁵ Beardsley Ruml to Geoffrey W. Young, June 13, 1927, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁵⁶ Reinhold Schairer, *Niederschrift. Über den Verlauf der von Minister Dufour-Feronce einberufenen Sitzung zwecks Schaffung eines deutschen Komitees für die Amerikanische begabte-Stiftung*, n.d. [December 16, 1927], p. 3. Enclosed in Hans Simons to Carl H. Becker, December 23, 1927, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4559.

⁵⁷ Carl H. Becker to Dufour-Feronce, December 28, 1927, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4559, Albert Dufour-Feronce to Carl H. Becker, December 30, 1927, BArch, R 4901/1155, and Hans Simons to Carl H. Becker, February 10, 1928, BArch, R 4901/1155.

⁵⁸ Hans Simons to Carl H. Becker, February 10, 1928, BArch, R 4901/1155.

⁵⁹ Reinhold Schairer and Hans Simons, “Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 1, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁶⁰ Reinhold Schairer and Hans Simons, “Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 5, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁶¹ Reinhold Schairer and Hans Simons, “Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 2, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

to serve a “vast complementary area” to the one covered by public institutions and take “risks upon which a State System may not venture.”⁶² To this end, it aimed to support “the type of personality ... which is born for original thought or active leadership, but is deprived by circumstances of the opportunity to develop the one, or assert the other.”⁶³ The foundation developed a close relationship with the Reich Ministries of Education and of the Interior. Becker reportedly regarded it as “an auxiliary cultural agency, filling a gap of which he was already cognizant,” whereas Carl Severing saw its value in supporting social mobility.⁶⁴ Accordingly, Young concluded his first year’s report by stating that the Foundation had “become a ‘quasi-State’ organization.”⁶⁵ The Abraham Lincoln Foundation and the DHfP typified organizations developing at the crucial intersection between private initiative and public action.

The relationship with German philanthropists and American philanthropic foundations guaranteed a certain level of political independence. The case of the German School of Politics, however, shows that U.S. foundations influenced the development of the DHfP through their grants. In part, the School’s increasing emphasis on research and foreign relations paralleled the interests of American financial supporters. While establishing the Stresemann Memorial Foundation and the Peace Academy, Jäckh was well aware of the interest of the Rockefeller Foundation in the development of institutes devoted to the study of international problems. He therefore strategically contacted the

⁶² Geoffrey Winthrop Young, “Covering Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 4, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁶³ Geoffrey Winthrop Young, “Covering Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 4, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁶⁴ Geoffrey Winthrop Young, “Covering Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 12, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See also Carl H. Becker to Winthrop Young, May 22, 1930, GStA PK, VI. HA, NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4559.

⁶⁵ Geoffrey Winthrop Young, “Covering Report,” in Abraham Lincoln Stiftung, *First Year’s Report*, p. 13, folder 160, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

European representatives of American foundations in order to secure funds for his new endeavors. Paradoxically, however, the relationship with American financial supporters also caused tension with German political elites, who believed that they had been bypassed by Jäckh.

On October 2, 1930, a Founding Assembly put Jäckh in charge of developing two new organizations devoted to the scientific study of international relations, the Stresemann Memorial Foundation and the Peace Academy.⁶⁶ The Foundation aimed to “serve the balancing of international tensions and to form among the nations mutual understanding for foreign nature and interests” by supporting both directly and indirectly scientific research.⁶⁷ In Jäckh’s intentions, the goal of the Stresemann Memorial Foundation was to stimulate and support endeavors in the field of foreign relations and facilitate the interaction of personalities interested in peace studies. Consequently, he conceived the Peace Academy as a working group of personalities (rather than an institute) investigating political problems.⁶⁸ Since the inception, the Founding Assembly had, however, decided to avoid publicity and to keep the activities of the Peace Academy “quiet” because of Germany’s contentious political environment.⁶⁹

In a well-established strategy, Jäckh had unofficially contacted the European representatives of the Rockefeller Foundation in the spring of 1930. John van Sickle had met with August W. Fehling in Berlin in February 1930 with the goal of exploring the

⁶⁶ Gustav Stresemann had died of a stroke in October 1929. The Foundation was thus established “To honor the memory of the statesman [Stresemann] who knew to place national interest and international solidarity under the higher idea of a just political order and understood this as a unity and pushed this through.” *Statut der Stresemann-Stiftung*, n.d., p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁶⁷ *Statut der Stresemann-Stiftung*, n.d., p. 1, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁶⁸ Ernst Jäckh, *Protokoll der 1. Sitzung des Praesidiums der Stresemann-Stiftung am 15. Juni 1931*, pp. 6-7, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁶⁹ Ernst Jäckh, *Vertraulicher Bericht über die Entwicklung der Friedensakademie*, December 24, 1930, R 43-I/513.

possibility to establish an Institute of International Studies. Although he stressed that the “time was not yet ripe,” Fehling announced that an “important person had consulted him confidentially” regarding similar plans.⁷⁰ In mid-April, Fehling revealed that Jäckh was the driving force behind this initiative.⁷¹ Notwithstanding these initial contacts, however, the RF was not involved in the establishment of the Stresemann Foundation and the Peace Academy, which – as Fehling communicated to Sickle – were nonetheless launched with American support.⁷²

Jäckh had also established contacts with Nicholas M. Butler who facilitated the establishment of the Stresemann Memorial Foundation. Jäckh’s regular updates to Butler confirm the deep interest of the president of the CEIP in the plans for the establishment of the Peace Academy.⁷³ In a broadcasted appeal in the United States on June 21, Julius Curtius, Germany’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, stressed the “community of purpose” that existed between Germany and the United States and announced the intention to establish a Peace Academy.⁷⁴ In a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, Butler celebrated Curtius’s “splendid and epoch-making words” and asked for public support to the Peace Academy.⁷⁵

Butler established an American “Stresemann-Memorial-Committee,” which had the goal of raising funds for the German institute and included an impressive list of

⁷⁰ John van Sickle Officer’s Diary, February 17, 1930, box 482, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁷¹ John van Sickle Officer’s Diary, April 15, 1930, box 482, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁷² John van Sickle Officer’s Diary, July 4, 1930, box 482, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

⁷³ Nicholas M. Butler to Ernst Jäckh, June 4, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML, Ernst Jäckh to Nicholas M. Butler, Telegram, June 13, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML, and Ernst Jäckh to Nicholas M. Butler, Telegram, June 16, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML.

⁷⁴ “Address by Julius Curtius, German Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the People of the United States, June 21, 1930 and Related Material,” *International Conciliation*, no. 263 (October 1930), 9-14. See also *New York Times*, “Curtius Calls on US to Organize Peace,” June 22, 1930.

⁷⁵ Nicholas M. Butler, “Dr. Curtius’s Appeal. We Should Cooperate in German Foreign Minister’s Peace Plans,” *New York Times*, June 26, 1930.

diplomats and politicians.⁷⁶ These plans, however, collapsed in the wake of the economic crisis.⁷⁷ In fact, already before Curtius's address, Butler had warned that the economic crisis would likely impact the American Committee's fundraising efforts.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, Butler made possible a one-time grant of M 100,000 from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.⁷⁹ With the failure of Butler's Committee, the founding circle of the Stresemann Foundation turned back to the RF.⁸⁰ Aware that an Institute of International Relations was an old plan of RF officers, Jäckh expressed his confidence that the RF would welcome the new Foundation.⁸¹ In fact, the RF appropriated a grant of \$25,000.⁸²

Germany's political elites manifested their interest in Jäckh's new endeavor. In November 1930, Chancellor Heinrich Brüning congratulated Jäckh's success in establishing an independent institute that was named after Stresemann.⁸³ Surprised by Brüning's knowledge about the Stresemann Memorial, Jäckh asked for a phone meeting with Hermann Pünder (State Secretary in the Reich Chancellery) to discuss the "political

⁷⁶ Nicholas M. Butler to Charles Nagel, June 23, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 324, Folder 4, RBML. Butler sent similar letters to Alanson B. Houghton, Norman H. Davis, Frank B. Kellogg, S. Parker Gilbert, Frederic M. Sackett, Ferdinand W. Lafrentz (president of the Germanistic Society), Henry L. Stimson, Elihu Root, Jacob Gould Schurman, John W. Davis, Bainbridge Colby, James W. Gerard, Charles G. Dawes, David Jayne Hill, and Colonel Edward M. House.

⁷⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Nicholas M. Butler, December 8, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 313, Folder 14, RBML and Nicholas M. Butler to Ernst Jäckh, February 3, 1931, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 313, Folder 14, RBML.

⁷⁸ Nicholas M. Butler to Ernst Jäckh, June 18, 1930, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 332, Folder 8, RBML.

⁷⁹ Nicholas M. Butler to Ernst Jäckh, May 8, 1931, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 313, Folder 14, RBML, Ernst Jäckh to Nicholas M. Butler, December 10, 1931, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 313, Folder 14, RBML, and Henry H. Haskell to Ernst Jäckh, December 16, 1931, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 313, Folder 14, RBML.

⁸⁰ Julius Curtius, *Protokoll der Sitzung des Praesidiums der Stresemann-Stiftung am 10 Februar 1932*, n.d., p. 3. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁸¹ Julius Curtius, *Protokoll der Sitzung des Praesidiums der Stresemann-Stiftung am 10 Februar 1932*, n.d., pp. 4-6. GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁸² *Aktennotiz über eine Aussprache über das Ergebnis wechselseitigen Besprechungen mit Dr. Ruml*, July 3, 1931, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483, Friedrich Schmidt-Ott to Beardsley Ruml, July 25, 1931, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483, Selskar Gunn to Friedrich Schmidt-Ott, December 21, 1931, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483, Friedrich Schmidt-Ott to Selskar Gunn, December 30, 1931, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483.

⁸³ Heinrich Brüning to Ernst Jäckh, November 8, 1930, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 55.

development” of the Peace Academy.⁸⁴ By the end of the year, Jäckh reported that both the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Office had declared their agreement with the by-laws of his new organizations.⁸⁵ A year after, however, Reich Interior Minister Joseph Wirth protested against the exclusion of the his ministry from the activities of the Stresemann Memorial and threatened repercussions on the DHfP.⁸⁶ According to Jäckh’s account, Wirth was dissatisfied with the exclusion of political figures from the activities of the Stresemann Memorial. In a letter to Wirth, Jäckh stressed that the Rockefeller Foundation had explicitly requested the exclusion of politicians and would have withdrawn its support in front of “political names.”⁸⁷ While he justified his actions with RF policies, Jäckh shared the approach of his American financial supporters that viewed “objective” research as a guarantee for his two new endeavors’ nonpartisanship.

The Abraham Lincoln Foundation, the German School of Politics, and the Stresemann Memorial Foundation and Peace Academy exemplify German public intellectuals’ attempt to influence public affairs through private initiatives. In a development that is typical of German voluntary organizations, these organizations relied on private philanthropy but maintained a high degree of interaction with the state, and often this relationship fluctuated between a tacit form of coercion and a voluntary one of cooperation. The contrasts between Wirth and Jäckh also point to the limits of these intellectuals’ conception of nonpartisanship. By rejecting the involvement of politicians and political institutions, Jäckh aimed to secure his organizations amid the rapid

⁸⁴ Ernst Jäckh to Hermann Pünder, November 11, 1930, BArch, R43-I/782.

⁸⁵ Ernst Jäckh, *Vertraulicher Bericht über die Entwicklung der Friedensakademie*, December 24, 1930, p. 1, BArch, R43-I/513.

⁸⁶ Aufzeichnungen über den telefonischen Anruf von Reichsminister Dr. Wirth am 6. Juli 1931. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Hermann Pünder, July 11, 1931, BArch, R43-I/513

⁸⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Joseph Wirth, July 7, 1931. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Hermann Pünder, July 11, 1931, BArch, R43-I/513.

radicalization of German society. In so doing, however, he favored the progressive penetration of conservative and right-wing forces in liberal and democratic institutions.

The Withering Away of Civil Society and the End of the “Politics of Civility.”

Germany’s political society shifted to the right even before the economic crisis of 1929. The stabilization of the Weimar Republic had paved the path to a reorganization of conservative forces. Elected chairman in October 1928, the industrialist and supporter of both the *Politische Kolleg* and the “June-Club,” Alfred Hugenberg, guided the DNVP on a course of opposition to the republic. At the same time, changes in the chairmanship of the DVP and the Catholic Center Party testified to a general shift to the right.

Furthermore, the emergence in the second half of the 1920s of special interest parties signaled the inability of Germany’s more established bourgeois parties to contain the contrasting interests of their constituencies. These transformations signaled the gradual dissolution of the parliamentary system.⁸⁸

In the second half of the 1920s, the DHfP became the venue for an emblematic debate over the form of the German state. In several lectures held at the DHfP, the conservative Carl Schmitt and the social democrat Herman Heller proposed radically contrasting analyses of the Weimar Republic, although both accused an earlier generation of legal scholars of ignoring crucial questions on the legality and legitimacy of political institutions.⁸⁹ Two of their most original contributions – Schmitt’s “The Concept of the Political” and Heller’s “Political Democracy and Social Homogeneity” – appeared in a volume edited by Arnold Wolfers, which was emblematically titled *Problems of*

⁸⁸ See Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 216-268 and Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933*, 291-305.

⁸⁹ Hermann Heller, “Die Krisis der Staatslehre,” *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 55 (1926), 289-316. See Ellen Kennedy, “Introduction to Hermann Heller,” *Economy and Society*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1987), 120-126.

Democracy.⁹⁰ Heller regularly taught at the DHfP, where he was part of a younger generation of pro-democracy scholars.⁹¹ By contrast, Schmitt was not directly associated to the School, although an attempt had been made to hire him.⁹²

Schmitt's critique of the parliamentary system became extremely influential in the second half of the 1920s. Democracy, he argued, rested on a series of identities that could be subsumed under the defining one between the people and the law. Societies were an integrated unity of identical individuals, and therefore the restoration of the unity between rulers and the ruled was possible only if the identity of the collectivity inspired those in command.⁹³ Schmitt, however, decoupled democracy from parliamentarism. Based on openness and discussion, parliamentarism, Schmitt observed, contradicted mass democracy, which had made public discussion an "empty and trivial formality."⁹⁴ Mass democracy had made liberal institutions obsolete because they could not embody the will of the people (and hence ensure the identity between governed and governing).⁹⁵ Consequentially, Schmitt concluded, "dictatorial and Caesaristic methods not only can produce the acclamation of the people but can also be a direct expression of democratic substance and power."⁹⁶ Schmitt's emphasis on the legitimization of authority by acclamation thus represents a justification of authoritarian rule based on social homogeneity.

Heller also recognized the general crisis of democracy, which he rooted in the tension between political unity and social multiplicity. He rejected Schmitt's assertion

⁹⁰ Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Probleme der Demokratie* (Berlin: Verlag Walter Rotschild, 1928).

⁹¹ Eisfeld, "Nationale Politikwissenschaft," 249-251.

⁹² Heuss, *Erinnerungen, 1905-1933*, 302.

⁹³ Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988 [1923]), 22-32.

⁹⁴ Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, 50.

⁹⁵ Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, 33-50.

⁹⁶ Carl Schmitt, "Preface to the Second Edition (1926): On the Contradiction between Parliamentarism and Democracy," in Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, 17.

that the basic criterion of politics was the distinction between “friend” and “enemy,”⁹⁷ because doing so would dismiss the formation of unity out of multiplicity as “nonpolitical.”⁹⁸ Rejecting Schmitt’s definition, he grounded the parliament in “the belief in the existence of a common discussion ground and, with it, the possibility of *fair play* with the opponent in domestic politics, with whom it is believed possible to reach an agreement with the elimination of naked violence.”⁹⁹ Democracy, Heller concluded, required a certain level of “social homogeneity,” which would create a common ground for a civil debate with the enemy and hence not be aimed at the physical destruction of the opponent. He defined “social homogeneity” as a “socio-psychological condition,” in which an “us-consciousness” integrated the contrasting interests that necessarily exist in a modern society.¹⁰⁰

Heller drew attention to the intrinsic limit of a conception of civil society based on civility. Like Jäckh and his closest associates, he grounded the good working of a liberal democracy in the praxis of accepting the enemy as a political adversary. If intended as the “politics of civility,” the concept of *Überparteilichkeit* pointed to the need to create a common ground regulating and containing socio-political conflicts. By conceptualizing *Überparteilichkeit* as an equal presence of political parties, however, these intellectuals renounced efforts to bridge German society’s socio-political tensions and trusted political society’s ability to integrate all political positions. In doing so, they participated in public debates seeking new democratic forms that would better ensure – to use Schmitt’s terminology – the identity between governing and governed.

⁹⁷ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007 [1932 edition]).

⁹⁸ Hermann Heller, “Politische Demokratie und soziale Homogenität,” *Probleme der Demokratie*, edited by Arnold Wolfers (Berlin: Verlag Walter Rotschild, 1928), 37-38.

⁹⁹ Heller, “Politische Demokratie und soziale Homogenität,” 40.

¹⁰⁰ Heller, “Politische Demokratie und soziale Homogenität,” 41.

Consequentially, they would support governments that, in their view, could legitimately bypass the gridlocked parliament because they were rooted in the extraordinary powers that Article 48 granted to a democratically elected Reich president.

The leadership of the DHfP had initially trusted the republic's ability to provide such common ground. Theodor Heuss had voiced this confidence and ridiculed the leadership principle.¹⁰¹ Although aware of parliamentary critics' call for "action," Heuss argued that these anti-parliamentary movements would faint by participating in democratic processes because "the 'deed' ... loses its suggestive power if entombed in manifests and speeches, in statutes and brochures."¹⁰² Heuss thus expressed liberals' common belief that political praxis and the sharing of responsibility would inevitably neutralize anti-parliamentary forces. At the same time, however, Heuss linked the stability of a democratic state to the solidity of its political institutions rather than to the pre-conditions of democracy, that is, civil society.

Conservative members of the Jäckh circle, however, had renewed the criticism of the parliamentary system and the resulting fragmentation of German society already in the mid-1920s. Liberal political institutions appeared unable to bridge the tension between private interest and the common good, hence creating a "formal" rather than a "real" democracy.¹⁰³ Voluntary associations reinforced societal fragmentation because they were trapped in "the hypnosis of juxtapositions,"¹⁰⁴ whereas "vulgarity and meanness" dominated the political discussions in public assemblies.¹⁰⁵ These intellectuals stressed the need to search for new forms of societal organization by pointing to the

¹⁰¹ Heuss, *Staat und Volk*, 99.

¹⁰² Heuss, "Parteien und Bünde," 182.

¹⁰³ Adolf Grabowsky, "Formal- und Realdemokratie," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1925), 129-130.

¹⁰⁴ Arnold Bergstraesser, "Staat und Wehrverbände," *Europäische Revue*, vol. 3 (1927), 301-302.

¹⁰⁵ Hoetzsch, "Deutschland als Grenzland, Deutschland als Reich," 10-11.

failure of both voluntary associations and political institutions to bridge socio-political conflicts.

In the last years of the Weimar Republic, the intellectuals associated with the DHfP (like most Germans) participated in a public debate over the future form of the German state. Heller wryly noted that most Germans agreed on the necessity to reform the Constitution,¹⁰⁶ yet he continued to stress its successes and warn against the risks of dictatorial systems.¹⁰⁷ Without the hesitations of his Social Democratic colleague, Otto Hoetzsch pointed to the difficulties of forming stable governments in Germany, and concluded, “We Germans are still in search of a system of government entirely suitable for us and adapted to all presuppositions which determine, once for all, our political being.”¹⁰⁸ Even more explicitly, the Spahn group argued that the identity between ruler and ruled had to be created “from above,” that is, the government must seek the approval of the nation after acting because only an independent conduct of the state could free Germany from chaos and anarchy.¹⁰⁹ The conservative faculty members of the DHfP thus voiced the general turn toward plebiscitary forms of democracy.

In March 1930, President von Hindenburg entrusted Heinrich Brüning, leader of the Catholic Center Party, to form the new government. Although previous governments had ruled by presidential emergency decrees, the Brüning governments from the fall of

¹⁰⁶ Hermann Heller, “Ziele und Grenzen einer deutschen Verfassungsreform” (1931), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 413.

¹⁰⁷ See for example Hermann Heller, “Rechtsstaat oder Diktatur?” (1929), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 443-462 and Hermann Heller, “Was bringt uns eine Diktatur? Fascismus und Wirklichkeit” (1929), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 437-442. On the successes of the Weimar Constitution see Hermann Heller, “Freiheit und Form in der Reichsverfassung” (1929/30), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 376-377.

¹⁰⁸ Hoetzsch, *Germany's Domestic and Foreign Policies*, 28.

¹⁰⁹ Heinz Brauweiler, “Parlamentarische oder plebiszitäre Demokratie?” *Der Ring*, vol. 3, no. 10 (March 9, 1930), 183-184.

1930 to May 1932 signaled the clear intention to reform Germany's political system in an authoritarian way. The results of the September 1930 elections confirmed the crisis of the parliamentary system. Liberal parties' share of the popular vote fell from 23 percent in the national elections of 1919 to 8.4 percent in September 1930. By comparison, the NSDAP moved from a mere 2.6 percent in 1928 to a startling 18.3 percent in 1930, which made it the second largest party in the parliament after the SPD (with 24.5 percent). The electoral successes of both the NSDAP, whose significant successes in regional elections had anticipated the September landslide, and of the Communist Party (with 13.1 percent) confirmed the radicalization of German society.¹¹⁰

Emblematically, the liberal circles around the DHfP and Jäckh supported Brüning's reliance on presidential authority, thus confirming the general authoritarian turn of political culture. Already before Brüning's nomination to chancellor, Heuss and Friedrich Meinecke had voiced liberals' call for a strong head of state who would counter parliament's factionalism. In a discussion that had followed a lecture by Alexander Rüstow at the DHfP in July 1929, Heuss expressed his support to a strong president who was endowed with a direct political function rooted in its plebiscitary nature.¹¹¹ Similarly, Meinecke stressed the necessity to strengthen state's power and pointed to the role of the president in countering "party egoism."¹¹²

¹¹⁰ See Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 269-356 and Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933*, 352-391.

¹¹¹ In the framework of a series of lectures (Schmitt and Heller were the other speakers) on the relationship between democracy and dictatorship, the sociologist Alexander Rüstow had addressed the issue with a lecture emblematically titled "Dictatorship within the Boundaries of Democracy." The lecture and the following debate are reprinted in Waldemar Besson, "Zur Frage der Staatsführung in der Weimarer Republik," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1959), 85-111.

¹¹² Friedrich Meinecke, "Stärkung der Staatsgewalt," *Kölnische Zeitung*, January 1, 1930, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Meinecke, F., Nr. 99.

Most explicitly, in his role of unofficial envoy of the “New Germany,” Jäckh defended Brüning’s authoritarian turn by stressing that his authority was grounded in the Constitution and based on the consent of the people.¹¹³ He described Brüning as a “philosopher-statesman,” whose leadership was rooted in a genuine internationalism and a “Christian ethic.”¹¹⁴ During one of his journeys in the United States, the German Consulate in San Francisco noted that Jäckh’s positive analysis of the Brüning government served to reassure the American audience in regard to the stability of Germany’s democracy.¹¹⁵ Also in his correspondence with Rockefeller Foundation officers Jäckh voiced his “confidence in Germanys [sic] order and development.”¹¹⁶

The leadership of the DHfP had gradually lost faith in a pluralistic civil society supporting the liberal parliamentary system. Jäckh also viewed President von Hindenburg’s decision to dismiss Brüning in May 1932 as a necessity for a nation that appeared on the edge of a civil war. Under the influence of a small group of conservative notables and personalities, von Hindenburg entrusted Franz von Papen to form the new government. Papen ruled through emergency decrees and consciously aimed to transform the republic into a plebiscitary dictatorship. Jäckh rejected, however, the notion that the new government was reactionary and argued that it was “conservative” in the sense of “a government aiming at conserving, consolidating, fortifying the existing state, the

¹¹³ *Los Angeles Times*, “Bruening’s Power Cited,” October 15, 1931, BArch, R43-I/ 163.

¹¹⁴ Ernst Jäckh, “Bruening a ‘Mixture of Officer and Cardinal’,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 18, 1931, BArch, R 43-I/163, Ernst Jäckh, “German Stress,” *The Survey*, vol. 67 (1931), 261-262, 283-285, and *San Francisco Chronicle*, “World order Changing, Says German Envoy,” October 9, 1931, BArch, R43-I/163.

¹¹⁵ Deutsches Generalkonsulat San Francisco to Reichskanzlei, October 20, 1931, BArch, R43-I/163.

¹¹⁶ Ernst Jäckh to Edmund E. Day, March 15, 1932, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

republic.”¹¹⁷ In a confidential memorandum, he detailed the plan of general Kurt von Schleicher and von Hindenburg to “eliminate” parliamentary democracy “for a short time” in order to resist the combined pressures of National Socialism and bolshevism.¹¹⁸

In an address at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Wolfers similarly rejected gloomy visions of Germany’s transformation and defended the authoritarian political turn. He linked the weakness of the Weimar Constitution to the proportional system of representation, the hostile opposition of the nationalist parties, and the perception that the Constitution was a product of the military defeat. He justified the decision to “govern by ordinance” by arguing that the president had to make a choice between “the non-working Democratic Parliament and the still unshaken Democratic authority of the President-elect.” Although he did not support dictatorship or a restoration of the monarchy, Wolfers did not believe in a return to the Weimar Constitution, which – he argued – had to be reformed by establishing a First Chamber able to balance the power of the parliament, solving the dualism between Prussia and the Reich, and modifying the electoral system.¹¹⁹

The general authoritarian turn and the Cabinet Papen contributed to the new prominence of Heinrich von Gleichen and the *Herrenklub*. During the last months of the republic, observers described Gleichen as the “manager” who determined all political events in Germany.¹²⁰ The *Herrenklub* was the center of a network of associations and

¹¹⁷ Ernst Jäckh, Interview with *New York Times*, June 25, 1932, pp. 2-3, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹¹⁸ Ernst Jäckh, *Confidential Expose*, p. 1. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Edmund E. Day, June 29, 1932, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹¹⁹ Arnold Wolfers, “The Crisis of the Democratic Regime in Germany,” *International Affairs*, vol. 11, no. 6 (Nov., 1932), 757-782. Quotation on page 767.

¹²⁰ *Kreis-Zeitung*, “Wie steht der ‘Herrenklub’ zum Verfassungsstaat? Eine Unterredung mit Heinrich von Gleichen,” October 11, 1932, BArch, R 8034-III/150. See also *Nordischer Kurier*, “Der ‘Herrenklub’ und seine Brüder,” October 14, 1932, BArch, R 8034-III/150.

magazines that could not easily be aligned to a specific political party.¹²¹ By March 1926, it had around 250 members and focused on publishing activities, and aimed to influence both industry and academia.¹²² Although allegedly nonpartisan, the group was close to the wealthy elites and “right-leaning circles.”¹²³ In fact, it “serve[d] the social gathering of nationally-oriented personalities” and was rooted in the willingness for a personal commitment for the common good.¹²⁴

Gleichen had been reorganizing extra-parliamentary opposition since the abrupt end of the “June-Club” and the downgrading of the *Politische Kolleg*. He dismissed democracy as the “organized influence of moody masses on the state without political sense and goal,” which embodied the influence of a variety of interests – mostly economic – on state affairs.¹²⁵ Gleichen thus sought a conservatism of the *Persönlichkeit* that could overcome the limits of a mass democracy. Consequentially, he concluded, “State and nation require a system of domination, and indeed a rule of the few, who maintain in front of the mass their independence and superiority.”¹²⁶ Gleichen stressed the need for a new independent and revolutionary leadership, which could restore the power of the state in a way that liberal political institutions could not. He argued that the relationship between state and nation was broken because the Weimar Republic was a foreign imposition and, at the same time, by evolving into a social state, did not represent

¹²¹ Polizei-Präsident to Minister des Innern, November 20, 1928, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 370.

¹²² Polizei-Präsident to Minister des Innern, March 4, 1926, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 370.

¹²³ Polizei-Präsident to Minister des Innern, October 19, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 370.

¹²⁴ Richtlinien des Deutschen Herrenklubs Berlin. Enclosed in Polizei-Präsident to Minister des Innern, October 19, 1929, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 77, Tit. 4043, Nr. 370.

¹²⁵ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Oberschicht und Führung,” *Gewissen*, vol. 6, no. 28 (July 14, 1924), 2.

¹²⁶ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Oberschicht und Nation,” in *Die Einheit der nationalen Politik*, edited by Alfred Bozi and Alfred Niemann (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1925), 247-248.

the entirety of the nation.¹²⁷ Accordingly, he sought a new elite able to link the masses to the state, because the people required an upper class to become a nation.

Gleichen and his long-time associate Walter Schotte viewed Papen as the personification of this independent political leadership. The total independence of the political leadership was at the center of their political worldview. From this perspective, they criticized Brüning who had not used his powers to radically reform Reich and Constitution,¹²⁸ and had hence guaranteed the survival of the Weimar system by continuing to “play the comedy.”¹²⁹ By contrast, they viewed the Cabinet Papen as free of the bounds of political parties and thus able to overcome party politics.¹³⁰ Schotte, who Heller denounced as Papen’s “apologist,”¹³¹ celebrated the new government as something “fundamentally new” that fought against the parties and therefore against the Weimar Republic and was solely grounded in state’s authority, that is, in the responsibility for its actions out of its power.¹³²

In the second half of the 1920s, Heller and Schmitt had conceptually clarified the debate over the relationship between civil society and democracy. The intellectual circles that had formed around Gleichen and Jäckh interpreted, mediated, and adapted these political constructs. Drawing on Schmitt, Gleichen and Schotte viewed Papen as the independent leader that could impose the identity between ruler and ruled from above and thus isolate the detrimental influence of intermediary organizations. By contrast, Heller

¹²⁷ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Staat, Opposition und Nation. II. Der verlagerte Staat,” *Der Ring*, vol. 1, no. 47 (November 18, 1928), 893-894.

¹²⁸ Walter Schotte, “Staatsstreich oder Reichsreform,” *Der Ring*, vol. 4, no. 51 (December 18, 1931), 53.

¹²⁹ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Sagen, was zu tun ist!” *Der Ring*, vol. 4, no. 5 (February 1, 1931), 84.

¹³⁰ Heinrich von Gleichen, “Das Kabinett Papen,” Rundfunkansprache auf der “deutschen Welle,” Donnerstag, den 2. Juni 1932, BArch, R 8034-III/150.

¹³¹ Hermann Heller, “Autoritärer Liberalismus?” (1933), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, edited by Christoph Müller (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1971), 652.

¹³² Walter Schotte, *Der Neue Staat* (Berlin: Neufeld & Henius Verlag, 1932), 15-18.

was part of a group of younger scholars including Hans Simons, Sigmund Neumann, and Albert Salomon close to the SPD whose influence within the DHfP gradually declined.¹³³ At the same time, Jäckh and his associates turned toward authoritarian solutions to Germany's socio-political crisis and supported the government by emergency decrees under Brüning and von Papen.

While Gleichen's endorsement of Papen responded to a deep-seated skepticism of civil society's pluralistic nature, Jäckh's support to Brüning and Papen pointed to the intrinsic limits of civil society. Gleichen and Schotte negated the premises of civil society, that is, a pluralistic conception of society that, through the institutionalization of conflict, allowed all social strata's participation in public affairs. By contrast, the circle around Jäckh grew aware that associations, political institutions, and the "politics of civility" were unable to bridge socio-political conflicts and effectively resist the pressure of extremist propaganda. In their view, the emergency decrees were the threatened republic's last defense and not – as Gleichen and Schotte explicitly argued – a tool to dismantle the Weimar Republic of its liberal, and thus pluralistic, institutions. As a concept based on civility, tolerance, and compromise, civil society had rested on the stability of the political framework, that is, the ability of the political system to provide a common ground for the negotiation of socio-political conflicts. Civil society was defenseless if not provided with the means to resist powerful threats. The support of extraordinary powers of the president responded to the awareness of civil society's weakness.

¹³³ Hans Simons had been involved with the Prussian state since 1927, Salomon moved to Cologne in 1931, Heller to Frankfurt in 1932, and Sigmund Neumann became director of a community college in Berlin in 1930. Alfons Söllner, *Deutsche Politikwissenschaftler in der Emigration: Studien zur ihrer akkulturation und Wirkungsgeschichte mit einer Bibliographie*, (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996), 43. Cf. Missiroli, *Die Deutsche Hochschule für Politik*, 35-44.

The November 1930 celebration for the ten-year anniversary of the School revealed the ambivalences of the School's leadership in addressing Germany's problems. Celebrated by the liberal press,¹³⁴ for the last time, the School restated the centrality of the "politics of civility," although aware that it was doing so from inside the "parliament of political passion."¹³⁵ Jäckh again rejected the notion of politics as a "nasty song or buzzword phraseology,"¹³⁶ and Wolfers reaffirmed *Überparteilichkeit* as a "valuable delving" into one's own point of view through the analysis of all other "serious viewpoints."¹³⁷ At the same time, however, Brüning celebrated the School as the "focal point ... for Germany's intellectual and spiritual reconstruction,"¹³⁸ and Richard Schmidt from the University of Leipzig gave the keynote address on "The Leadership Problem in the Modern Democracy."¹³⁹

The DHfP was able to guarantee the peaceful interaction among increasingly politicized university students. Like in other German universities, students organized along party lines, although the leadership of the DHfP forbade membership in political parties to students of some of the School's programs.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, all political directions were represented in the Student Assembly's elections between 1930 and 1933. In contrast to other universities, however, the Nazi Student Party was unable to make

¹³⁴ Richard Junge, "Zehn Jahre Hochschule für Politik," *Der Abend*, November 6, 1930, BArch, R4901/1445, *Vossische Zeitung*, "Politik als Geisteswissenschaft," November 8, 1930, BArch, R4901/1445, and Catharina von Mayer, "Zum zehnjährigen Bestehen der deutschen Hochschule," *Die Frau* (January 1931), 237-240, BArch, R4901/1445.

¹³⁵ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, "Akademische Feier des 10jährigen Bestehens der DHfP," *Berichte der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, vol. 8, no. 7 (1930/31), 114.

¹³⁶ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, "Akademische Feier des 10jährigen Bestehens der DHfP," 114.

¹³⁷ Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, "Akademische Feier des 10jährigen Bestehens der DHfP," 116.

¹³⁸ Heinrich Brüning to Ernst Jäckh, November 8, 1930, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 55.

¹³⁹ The lecture is reprinted in Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Probleme der Demokratie*, second series (Berlin: Verlag Walter Rothschild, 1931)

¹⁴⁰ Johann Strunz to Horst-Alexander Lindemann, November 28, 1931, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 166, Horst-Alexander Lindemann to Johann Strunz, November 29, 1931, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 166, and Johann Strunz to Horst-Alexander Lindemann, December 1, 1931, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 166.

significant inroads in the student body and left-oriented groups maintained a clear majority.¹⁴¹ The Nazi Student Party's weakness is not surprising since the DHfP had been identified with the republic since its establishment in October 1920.¹⁴² The absence of riots between Communists and Nazis could have also depended – as some contemporaries suggested – on the fact that, because of the School's low academic standing, enrolled students were genuinely interested in the study of politics.¹⁴³ Nonetheless, the Nazi Student Party increased its activities and compelled other student groups to react,¹⁴⁴ hence forcing the leadership of the School to counter students' rapid radicalization.¹⁴⁵

The DHfP was an exception against the background of violent clashes at German universities. The liberal press celebrated the School as a place where students learned that it was possible to find a common ground for discussion even with the most radical political or ideological adversary.¹⁴⁶ The RF officers also noted that the School did not witness the riots and disturbances of other universities.¹⁴⁷ This was a remarkable success considering that enrollments in the main course of study had steadily increased since the

¹⁴¹ Korenblat, "A School for the Republic?" 421-422. Korenblat draws the election data from "Hörrausschuss," GStA PK, I.HA, Rep. 303, file 223. The data in Wahlergebnis, December 18, 1931, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 238, Wahlergebnis, January 22, 1932, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 238, and Amtliches Wahlergebnis, February 10, 1933, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303 neu, Nr. 238 present some minor differences, although confirming the general trend.

¹⁴² Although it has an anecdotal value, it is emblematic that a student, after failing an exam, accused Theodor Heuss of being discriminated for her nationalist orientation. Theodor Heuss, Theodor Heuss to Dr. Hans Simons, March 3, 1926, in *Briefe 1918-1933*.

¹⁴³ Martin Boettcher, "... was wissenschaftlich arbeiten heisst," *Der Abend*, July 30, 1931, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁴⁴ See for example Carl Friedrich Möller to Leitung der DHfP, May 10, 1932, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 232, Leitung der DHfP to Carl Friedrich Möller, May 18, 1932, GStA, Berlin, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 232, and "Unser Kampf in der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik," *Der deutsche Student, Sonderausgabe*, February 1933, GStA PK, I.HA Rep. 303, Nr. 232.

¹⁴⁵ Korenblat, "A School for the Republic?" 424-429.

¹⁴⁶ Lothar Wiesner, "Man mache den Studenten klar..." *Der Abend*, July 30, 1931, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See also "Jugend und Politik," *Berliner Tageblatt*, March 21, 1932, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁴⁷ Grant Action, RF 32130, April 13, 1932, p. 1, folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

reorganizations of the academic program.¹⁴⁸ According to the School's leadership, this responded to the general interest in political education and testified to the high regard of all parties, "from the Communists to the National Socialists," for the DHfP,¹⁴⁹ although high levels of unemployment surely contributed to the increased levels of enrollment.¹⁵⁰ The DHfP therefore claimed success in instilling in its students a spirit of "scientific *Überparteilichkeit*."¹⁵¹

While Jäckh and the leadership of the DHfP were able to maintain a level of perceived normality within their institute, civility swiftly broke down in Germany's public sphere. Paramilitary groups and street fights became new forms of socialization,¹⁵² and violence served as a creative force by creating a moral distance between militants and a despised bourgeois civil society.¹⁵³ These dynamics were part of a political culture that legitimized violence and, by labeling as outcasts political opponents, restricted the public space. While arguably political violence remained limited, the discourses surrounding it paved the path for a slow but progressive radicalization.¹⁵⁴ Quite consequentially, this celebration of militant associational life narrowed the gap with the activism of the Nazi movement.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁸ In the winter semester of 1931/32, enrollments had reached the astonishing number of 569 (they had been 277 only a year earlier). *Mitteilung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik über den Stand ihrer Arbeiten im Jahre 1931/32*, February 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 7073.

¹⁴⁹ *Mitteilung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik über den Stand ihrer Arbeiten im Jahre 1931/32*, February 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 7073.

¹⁵⁰ Korenblat, "A School for the Republic?" 421.

¹⁵¹ DHfP, *Mitteilung der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik über das SS 1932*, October 1932, GStA Berlin, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 1110.

¹⁵² Reichardt, "Gewalt, Körper, Politik," 205-239.

¹⁵³ Robert Gerwarth, "The Central European Counter-Revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War," *Past and Present*, no. 200 (2008), 192-193.

¹⁵⁴ Dirk Schumann, "Political Violence, Contested Public Space, and Reasserted Masculinity in Weimar Germany," in *Weimar Public/Weimar Subjects. Rethinking the Political Culture of Germany in the 1920s*, edited by Kathleen Canning, Kerstin Barndt, and Kristin McGuire (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 236-253.

¹⁵⁵ Bösch, "Militante Geselligkeit," 171-174.

By the late 1920s, and in particular with the worsening of the economic crisis, National Socialists rapidly penetrated all spheres of social life across Germany. In some areas, such as the Black Forest, the collapse of the organizational infrastructure of the bourgeois camp created an associational vacuum that favored the successes of the NSDAP.¹⁵⁶ By contrast, in the case of the city of Marburg, Rudy Koshar described the infiltration of social organizations by Nazi activists as a “routine social process” that reproduced general patterns of joining associations.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, also William Allan detailed the poisonous mixture of mass meetings, paramilitary parades, entertainment evenings, and auxiliary organizations that transformed the Nazi party from a fringe faction into a well-organized group in the city of Northeim.¹⁵⁸ The Nazi party thus manifested a high degree of adaptability to the local context.

In a time of heightened social and political conflict, attempts to limit and contain political factionalism with social organizations became hard. In this context, the distinction between political discussion and political passion became more difficult to maintain. While the School of Politics was relatively successful in doing so within its four walls, it had clearly taken on too large of a task at the national level. Celebrating its successes, Jäckh suggested expanding the model of the DHfP and organizing with other universities special courses that could counter political radicalization across Germany.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Oded Heilbronner, “Der Verlassene Stammtisch. Vom Verfall der bürgerlichen Infrastruktur und dem Aufstieg der NSDAP am Beispiel der Region Schwarzwald,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1993), 178-201.

¹⁵⁷ Rudy Koshar, *Social Life, Local Politics, and Nazism. Marburg, 1880-1935* (Chapel Hill: The university of North Carolina, 1986), 212.

¹⁵⁸ William S. Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power. The Experience of A Single German Town, 1922-1945*, revised edition (New York: Franklin Watts, 1984).

¹⁵⁹ *Aufzeichnung des Präsidenten der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, Berlin, über die Notwendigkeit und Möglichkeit von staatspolitischen, überparteilichen Reichskursen*. Enclosed in Ernst Jäckh to Erwin Planck, December 20, 1932, BArch, R 43-I/782.

At the same time Heuss in his typical, dispassionate style, analyzed the rise to power of Hitler's movement.¹⁶⁰

In this context, research and foreign affairs had an integrative political function. With the political radicalization and the increasing tensions within the DHfP, both research and foreign policy were less controversial than civic education and practical training. Objective research was deemed politically neutral and therefore above political factionalism. Furthermore, foreign affairs provided a common ground for both liberal and conservative faculty members who, to a large degree, agreed on the ultimate goals of foreign policy. As a result, those programs that directly supported the democratic state (such as Strunz's "Civics Seminar") were at the center of conservatives' attack.

With the stabilization of the Weimar Republic, Germany's intellectual elites had turned their attention to foreign affairs. They aimed to promote national objectives that would satisfy both the German and the international audience. At the same time, however, this emphasis on foreign policy goals facilitated the inclusion of intellectuals from all German parties, who all shared the commitment to the recovery of Germany's international status. Jäckh recognized that most parties agreed on Germany's general foreign policy goals.¹⁶¹ The emphasis on the international tasks thus could create bridges between the liberal leadership of the DHfP and its conservative faculty members.

The case of Otto Hoetzsch epitomizes the integrative function of foreign affairs. Hoetzsch had first symbolized the gradual alignment of the PK to the DNVP and now personified conservatives' penetration in the DHfP. Like Jäckh and his associates, Hoetzsch linked Germany's fate to Europe's destiny and argued that World War One had

¹⁶⁰ Theodor Heuss, *Hitlers Weg. Eine historisch-politische Studie über den Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1932).

¹⁶¹ Jäckh, *Deutschland, das Herz Europas*, 101-102.

transformed Europe into a “beggar.”¹⁶² While Hoetzsch stressed the necessity to revise the Treaty of Versailles in order to “establish real and lasting peace in Europe,” he reassured his international audience that this must be achieved “by peaceful means and [in] a peaceful way, of course.”¹⁶³ Hoetzsch personified the distrust in the League of Nations, which he rooted in the injustices of the Versailles Treaty.¹⁶⁴ With the liberal leadership of the DHfP, Hoetzsch participated in the efforts to present the “New Germany” abroad and, as a member of the DNVP, symbolized the integration of all political parties in the DHfP and – by extension – in the political system of the Weimar Republic.

By the late 1920s therefore the relationship between foreign and domestic policy changed. In the aftermath of World War One, German intellectual elites had focused on domestic relationships. Internal stabilization was conceived as the precondition for a new, energetic foreign policy. Adolf Grabowsky restated the theoretical primacy of foreign affairs over domestic policy against a younger generation of scholars who pointed to the domestic function of foreign policy.¹⁶⁵ The shift in the meaning of *Überparteilichkeit*, however, stresses that the re-affirmed primacy of foreign affairs did not exclusively depend on the faith in domestic stabilization. Rather, foreign policy goals became the common ground for the integration of intellectuals with radically contrasting perspectives on Germany’s political organization.

¹⁶² Otto Hoetzsch, *Die weltpolitische Kräfteverteilung seit den Pariser Friedensschlüssen*, 5. umgearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage mit drei Kartenskizzen (Berlin: Zentralverlag, 1930), 15-16.

¹⁶³ Hoetzsch, *Germany's Domestic and Foreign Policies*, 63-64.

¹⁶⁴ Hoetzsch, “Der Gedanke des Völkerbundes als einer zwischenstaatlichen Organisation und seine Fassung durch Versailles,” 68-69.

¹⁶⁵ Eckart Kehr, “Englandhaß und Weltpolitik,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 17, no. 6 (1928), 500-526 and Adolf Grabowsky, “Der Primat der Außenpolitik,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 17, no. 6 (1928), 527-542.

In the second half of the 1920s, the initial focus on domestic politics and political education paved the path to a primacy of foreign affairs, which increasingly became the field of competency of radical nationalist scholars.¹⁶⁶ Grabowsky, Boehm, and Cleinow (respectively directors of the Geo-Political Seminar, *Deutschtumseminar*, and Euro-Asian Seminar) developed an aggressively nationalist approach to foreign affairs, which was grounded in the ambiguous concept of Germandom and in the relationship between *Volk* and “space.”¹⁶⁷ Emblematically, these conservative faculty members authored numerous contributions in a volume celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the DHfP, and thus symbolized conservatives’ successful penetration in the School of Politics.¹⁶⁸

The shift in the meaning of *Überparteilichkeit* points to the gradual abandonment of a conception of civil society based on civility. By providing practical knowledge, courses in public affairs could not only free Germans from the blinders of ideologies, but also instill in them an ethos that would help viewing the political enemy as an opponent with an equal right to participate in the political process. From this perspective, the good working of a liberal democracy depended on the development of the “politics of civility.” This conception of civil society recognized the unavoidability of conflicts in a modern society, and even encouraged them within the framework of liberal political institutions. The penetration of party politics in the DHfP and the inability to bridge these contrasts led to an emphasis on foreign affairs. The focus on foreign policy and on *Überparteilichkeit* as equal presence of political parties symbolized the shift towards an

¹⁶⁶ Lehnert, “‘Politik als Wissenschaft’,” 453-454.

¹⁶⁷ See the contributions by Adolf Grabowsky, Georg Cleinow, Max H. Boehm in Ernst Jäckh, ed., *Politik als Wissenschaft. Zehn Jahre Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1931).

¹⁶⁸ Söllner, “Gruppenbild mit Jäckh,” 41-64.

attempt to by-pass conflicts, hence renouncing the idea of institutionalizing them because of the fear that they would tear apart Germany's tenuous political equilibrium.

Ernst Jäckh between the Nazi Regime, American Philanthropy, and Exile

In the months before the Nazi seizure of power, Germany's elites did not find a political solution to the economic crisis. The governments under Brüning and von Papen were unable to win popular support. By contrast, in the election of July 31, 1932, the Nazi party confirmed its electoral success of September 1930 and became the largest political party with 37.3 percent of the votes. The NSDAP remained Germany's most powerful political force, although its share of the votes declined to 33.1 percent in the November elections following von Papen's failure to form a new government. In fact, even President von Hindenburg's close aide, General Kurt von Schleicher, was unable to form a broad government coalition in December 1932. As a result, after negotiations between von Papen and Hitler, President von Hindenburg nominated Hitler chancellor and von Papen vice-chancellor on January 31, 1933.

In his analysis of German political scientists during these fateful months, Rainer Eisfeld has reserved pages of acerbic criticism to Ernst Jäckh. He denounced Jäckh's efforts to portray himself as an uncompromising bulwark of liberalism and detailed his readiness to compromise with Germany's new political leadership.¹⁶⁹ Jäckh's egotistical personality and his self-celebratory accounts explain the sharpness of this criticism.

Jäckh's ambivalent attitude to the new regime, however, was more than a personal

¹⁶⁹ Jäckh's memoranda and letters of the time contradict his autobiographical account in Ernst Jäckh, *The War for Man's Soul* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943) and Ernst Jäckh, *Memorandum of conversation between Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler, and the President of the Deutsche Hochschule fuer Politik, in the presence of Secretary of State, Dr. Lammers*, Saturday, April 1, 1933. Enclosed in John Van Sickle to Edmund E. Day, April 13, 1933, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See Rainer Eisfeld, "German Political Science at the Crossroads," 33-41.

attitude to accommodation or an example of individual, political bankruptcy. In fact, Jäckh personifies the weakness of a conception of civil society grounded in the “politics of civility.”

Like most of the intellectuals at the center of this study, Jäckh trusted the capacity of political institutions to neutralize oppositional political forces by forcing them to take political responsibility. Speaking at London’s Chatham House on February 6, 1933, he explained that the Hitler-Papen government had forced Hitler to assume political responsibility, as had been done in the past with Gustav Stresemann and the SPD.¹⁷⁰ Consistently, he pursued the same strategy within the DHfP.¹⁷¹ Emblematically, Jäckh wrote Sickles,

there is the fact that the political situation has so developed that we have now to win over and convince only one more political party, viz. the National Socialists. We have been successful to date in convincing each party [sic] as it came into power of the scientific importance of our work. We shall be equally successful with the Hitler Party if we can work with concentrated power.¹⁷²

Accordingly, Jäckh gradually moved to the right and attempted to secure the survival of his School by increasing the number of both students and instructors who were part of the Nazi movement.¹⁷³ Hans H. Lammers, State Secretary and Chief of the Reich

Chancellery under Hitler, had been teaching at the DHfP since the late 1920s, and since

¹⁷⁰ Ernst Jäckh, *The Political Situation in Germany*, Address given at Chatham House on February 6, 1933, pp. 13-14, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁷¹ John Van Sickles to Edmund E. Day, February 22, 1933, p. 1, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁷² Quoted in John Van Sickles to Edmund E. Day, March 4, 1933, p. 1, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁷³ John Van Sickles to Edmund E. Day, February 22, 1933, p. 2, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

December 1932 Jäckh had allegedly been preparing his institute for the possibility of a Nazi seizure of power.¹⁷⁴

At the same time, Jäckh tried to narrow the distance between his political position and National Socialism. In line with the notion that political differences could be split and negotiated, he sought commonalities between two apparently irreconcilably political perspectives. Rooting his endeavor in the war, he juxtaposed the DHfP to the revolutionary turmoil of 1918-19.¹⁷⁵ In a private letter to the Führer, Jäckh celebrated Hitler's emphasis on the primacy of politics, which – he argued – was also one of the tenets of the DHfP.¹⁷⁶ At the same time, in an address given at the beginning of the new semester, he argued that the DHfP – like the Nazi Party – was rooted in the common attempt to unify all national political forces. He stressed that the DHfP had trained Nazis, counted among its faculty well-known Nazi leaders like Lammers, and represented a bridge between the national socialism of Friedrich Naumann and the one of Hitler.¹⁷⁷ Shortly after, Jäckh and Walter Simons were among a group of liberal-oriented Germans that, on the pages of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, stressed the necessity to “work together” with the “new state.”¹⁷⁸ The readiness to negotiate and to compromise, which was rooted in the “politics of civility,” and the eagerness to cooperate with the state apparatus thus led Jäckh down the slippery path of accommodation.

Within a few months, however, the belief in the neutralization of the Nazi movement was revealed to be illusory. Rapidly, Hitler and the NSDAP abrogated

¹⁷⁴ “Theodor Heuss to Friedrich Mück, December 3, 1932,” in *Briefe 1918-1933*, 518.

¹⁷⁵ Ernst Jäckh to Hans H. Lammers, March 12, 1933, p. 1, BArch, R43-II/948.

¹⁷⁶ Ernst Jäckh to Adolf Hitler, March 27, 1933, BArch, R43-II/948.

¹⁷⁷ Ernst Jäckh, *Eröffnung des Lehrgangs für preussische Studienassessoren in der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, March 27, 1933, pp. 4-5, BArch, R4901/1445.

¹⁷⁸ Ernst Jäckh, “Mitarbeit am neuen Staat,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, April 16, 1933, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 16, Scrapbook 29, RBML and Walter Simons, “Mitarbeit am neuen Staat,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, April 16, 1933, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 16, Scrapbook 29, RBML.

democratic and civil rights, and established a dictatorship. After the Reichstag Fire of February 27, 1933, President von Hindenburg had provided Hitler with broad emergency powers. Less than a month later, on March 23, 1933, the parliament, with the exception of communists and Social Democrats, voted the Enabling Act, which suspended the Constitutions and gave Hitler unchecked political powers. De facto, Germany's political elites – including Heuss and the other delegates of liberal parties – voted for a dictatorship. With the alleged reason of strengthening Germany's inner unity and countering domestic fragmentation, the new regime swiftly moved to outlaw opposition political parties and organizations. As part of the "policy of coordination," the new regime purged organizational life at all levels of politically and racially non-reliable members.¹⁷⁹ On March 31, after a meeting with Wolfers, Babcock reported on the political transformations in Germany and on the self-imposed censorship of Bonn, Prittwitz-Gaffron, and Wolfers in their letters to foundation officers.¹⁸⁰

Notwithstanding his willingness to compromise, Jäckh was unable to secure the survival of the DHfP, although Sickel voiced the faith in Jäckh's capacity to win over the new Chancellor on the eve of a decisive meeting with Hitler.¹⁸¹ On April 1, 1933, Jäckh met with Hitler in the Reich Chancellery, but upon Hitler's decision to subordinate the DHfP under the control of the Ministry of Propaganda he resigned his position of

¹⁷⁹ See Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 490-544, Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933*, 462-475, and Jill Stephenson, "Inclusion: building the national community in propaganda and practice," in *Nazi Germany*, edited by Jane Caplan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 99-121.

¹⁸⁰ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, March 31, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 3, RBML.

¹⁸¹ John Van Sickel, *Memorandum on DHfP and conversation with Wolfers in Paris on March 30, 1933*, n.d., Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

president of the School.¹⁸² After Jäckh's meeting with Hitler, Babcock reported the impression of Prittwitz-Gaffron that the meeting "did not produce as good results as we had hoped."¹⁸³ Indeed, in May, the School ceased to exist as an independent organization, the Ministry of Propaganda took over five of the sixteen full-time faculty members who would teach in the "coordinated" School, and put Jäckh in charge of liquidating the remaining costs of the old DHfP.¹⁸⁴

Unable to save the DHfP, Jäckh tried to establish an independent research center. In an address given on June 1, 1933, Jäckh stated that, although the Propaganda Ministry now controlled the DHfP, the research department "has remained a free organization, with express consent of the new State."¹⁸⁵ In line with the approach that had characterized the last years of the DHfP, he tried to guarantee the independence of a new research institute by including in the board of trustees Lammers and Otto Meissner as representatives of Hitler and von Hindenburg. In addition, next to Haas, Heuss, and Sigmund Neumann, the permanent staff also included the ultra-conservatives Boehm and Fritz Berber.¹⁸⁶ With the coordination of the DHfP, Jäckh believed that research would provide a common ground on which opposing political perspectives could be successfully integrated.

¹⁸² Ernst Jäckh to Hans H. Lammers, April 16, 1933, BArch, R 43-II/948. Martin Spahn actively worked against the efforts of the leadership of the DHfP by stressing the pacifist and democratic outlook of the School in letters to high-ranking officials of the new regime. Martin Spahn to Hans H. Lammers, April 2, 1933, BArch, R43-II/948 and Martin Spahn to [Hans Frank], April 8, 1933. BArch, R4901/1445.

¹⁸³ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, April 8, 1933, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 3, RBML.

¹⁸⁴ Joseph Goebbels to Reichsminister der Finanzen, May 10, 1933, BArch, R2/4920.

¹⁸⁵ Ernst Jäckh, *Address given at the 6th Conference of Institutions for the Scientific Study of International Relations in London on June 1, 1933*, n.d., p. 3, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁸⁶ John Van Sickle to Edmund E. Day, April 29, 1933, p. 2, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

The concept of *Überparteilichkeit* had led Jäckh and his associates to a gradually closer alignment with the state's political elites. The loyalty toward the German state thus had paved the path to the convinced support of the authoritarian governments of Brüning and von Papen. During the last months of the republic, Jäckh had become an unofficial envoy for the republican government and presented himself as the public advocate of the "New Germany," hence requesting meetings with the chancellor to discuss his travels abroad, as well as the topics to address in his public talks.¹⁸⁷ Jäckh was a respected commentator on German affairs because of his role as founder and president of the DHfP, which the Anglo-Saxon world regarded as one of Germany's few truly democratic institutions.¹⁸⁸ Although he maintained his political independence, Jäckh was close to the Republic's political elites and defended Germany's political leadership.

Jäckh presented himself as an indispensable asset for Germany's cultural diplomacy after the Nazi seizure of power. He boasted about his contacts in Great Britain and his propaganda successes in the United States,¹⁸⁹ and pointed to his efforts to "produce understanding for the new Germany" abroad.¹⁹⁰ In a letter to Lammers he stated, "independently on whether this Germany is called a first, second, or third one, I am decided even now to serve our common Fatherland and the German nation."¹⁹¹ Although this comment cannot be disentangled from Jäckh's attempts to secure his position in Germany, it stresses these intellectuals' peculiar mentality that made it difficult to take a route of radical opposition to the state. In fact, since World War One

¹⁸⁷ Ernst Jäckh to Erwin Planck, January 7, 1933, BArch, R43-I/782.

¹⁸⁸ See for example Eugene Harley, "The Hochschule für Politik: A Significant German Institution for the Teaching of Political Science," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 24, no. 2 (1930), 466-469.

¹⁸⁹ Ernst Jäckh to Hans H. Lammers, March 24, 1933, BArch, R43-II/948.

¹⁹⁰ Ernst Jäckh to Hans H. Lammers, April 24, 1933, BArch, R43-II/948.

¹⁹¹ Ernst Jäckh to Hans H. Lammers, April 16, 1933, p. 2, BArch, R43-II/948.

the influence of Germany's public intellectuals was based on their ability to place themselves at the critical intersection between private and public initiatives.

Jäckh's erratic maneuvering, however, failed to convince RF officers. In line with his attempt to make himself invaluable to the Nazi regime through his international connections, Jäckh tried to make his new research institute the center of the activities of the Rockefeller Foundation.¹⁹² Sickles, however, reported impressions "that Jäckh was manoeuvring, or was being manoeuvred into the post of an intellectual ambassador for the new regime," and stated that he "had cause to wonder in the last few months at the extraordinary capacity of adaptation shown by Jäckh."¹⁹³ The RF therefore refused to support the new Institute in the conviction that objective research was not possible anymore in Germany, although it appropriated a special grant of \$10,000 to Jäckh for the liquidation of the DHfP.¹⁹⁴

At the same time, the CEIP struggled to come to terms with the political transformations in Germany. Emblematically, Butler wrote Babcock, "I simply do not understand it in view of the completeness with which it contradicts my conception of the German mind and German history."¹⁹⁵ A few days later, he characterized the German developments as "a madly emotional outburst, manifesting itself in psychopathic fashion in various directions."¹⁹⁶ This uncertainty also depended on the difficulties of getting

¹⁹² John Van Sickles to Edmund E. Day, May 1, 1933, Folder 188, box 20, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹³ John Van Sickles, *Conversation of JVS with Dr. Jäckh, Paris, July 17 and 18, 1933*, July 18, 1933, p. 2, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁴ Grant Action, RF 32130, May 12, 1933, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC and Edmund E. Day to John Van Sickles, cable, May 12, 1933, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

¹⁹⁵ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, April 12, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 3, RBML.

¹⁹⁶ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, April 7, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 3, RBML.

information from German representatives both within and outside the country.¹⁹⁷ Like they were doing with the Rockefeller Foundation, however, Jäckh and Prittwitz-Gaffron tried to convince the CEIP to continue its work in Germany. After informing Babcock of the re-organization of the DHfP, Prittwitz-Gaffron reassured that these developments affected the Carnegie Chair only on a “purely formal level” and pointed out that the new regime had explicitly expressed its appreciation for the Carnegie Chair and its incumbent Hajo Holborn.¹⁹⁸

Like the RF, the leadership of the CEIP was confronted with the clear political implications of continuing its German programs. In May, after a meeting of the Board of Trustees, Butler informed Babcock on the decision to “preserve silence” regarding Germany and “struck out of our appropriations” in Germany and Austria because the “work we would do would be offensive to the ruling group in Germany.”¹⁹⁹ From Europe, however, Babcock argued,

We must not forget that encouragement and support of the liberal elements[,] which remain in Germany are now more important than before. The problem is to assure ourselves that this encouragement and support is not diverted to other ends than those we have in mind.²⁰⁰

Although after the summer Prittwitz-Gaffron suggested linking the Carnegie Chair to the Kaiser Wilhelm Society,²⁰¹ the Endowment decided to terminate the Chair when Holborn

¹⁹⁷ Earle B. Babcock to Henry S. Haskell, April 27, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁹⁸ Erich von Prittwitz-Gaffron to Earle B. Babcock, April 27, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 4, RBML.

¹⁹⁹ Nicholas M. Butler to Earle B. Babcock, May 5, 1933, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 3, RBML.

²⁰⁰ Earle B. Babcock to Henry S. Haskell, May 9, 1933, p. 1, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 4, RBML.

²⁰¹ Earle B. Babcock to Nicholas M. Butler, September 9, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 5, RBML.

was obliged to leave Germany for London.²⁰² Notwithstanding these developments, Babcock remained optimistic regarding the building “of the edifice of peace” in Europe.²⁰³

At the same time, the other organizations that had been established with the support of American philanthropic foundations faltered. The RF terminated its support to the Abraham Lincoln Stiftung in January 1934,²⁰⁴ although Hans Simons, Geoffrey W. Young, and August W. Fehling insisted on the importance of the work done and the concrete possibility to influence the course of events in Germany.²⁰⁵ By contrast, the Stresemann Memorial Foundation continued its activities, although Jäckh and Walter Simons renounced their leading positions.²⁰⁶ Curtius discussed the restructuring of the Memorial with Germany’s new political leadership.²⁰⁷ The ensuing negotiations focused on the transformation of the Memorial into an “Institute for foreign relations,”²⁰⁸ which would continue its activities under a different name.²⁰⁹ Informed of these changes,²¹⁰ Butler expressed the Endowment’s disappointment for the elimination of Stresemann’s

²⁰² Earle B. Babcock to Henry S. Haskell, October 9, 1933, CEIP Records, Series III, Box 111, Folder 5, RBML.

²⁰³ Earle B. Babcock, *European Cooperation for Peace*, An article written for *The New York Times* and published December 3, 1933, p. 2, CEIP Records, Series VIII, Box 340, Folder 9, RBML.

²⁰⁴ John Van Sickle to Hans Simons, January 17, 1934, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC and John Van Sickle to Geoffrey W. Young, January 17, 1934, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁰⁵ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on conversation with Simons on October 23, 1933*, October 24, 1933, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, John Van Sickle, *Memorandum on conversation with Young and Simons in Paris on November 16, 1933*, November 20, 1933, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, Hans Simons and Geoffrey W. Young, *Memorandum on the Abraham Lincoln Stiftung*, November 29, 1933, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on conversation with Dr. Fehling*, December 12, 1933, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁰⁶ Ernst Jäckh to Praesidial-Mitglieder der Stresemann-Stiftung, December 22, 1933, GStA PK, VI. HA N1 Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 483 and Julius Curtius to Fridrich Schmidt-Ott, February 14, 1940, GStA PK, VI. HA N1 Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 956.

²⁰⁷ Julius Curtius to Hans H. Lammers, February 16, 1934, BArch, R43-I/514.

²⁰⁸ Der Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei, Rk. 1715, February 21, 1934, BArch, R43-I/514.

²⁰⁹ Der Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei, Zu Rk. 1715, April 10, 1934, BArch, R43-I/514.

²¹⁰ Julius Curtius to Nicholas M. Butler, July 24, 1939, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 324, Folder 4, RBML.

name from the name of the organization.²¹¹ Eventually, in February 1940, the Prussian State Ministry decided for the liquidation of the organization.²¹²

After the failure to establish an independent research center and guarantee the survival of the Carnegie Chair in Berlin, Jäckh spent increasing time in London, although he regularly travelled to Germany where he maintained personal contacts with the new regime and participated in Nazi gatherings.²¹³ In England he became involved with Lord David Davies's New Commonwealth Society, which aimed to mobilize public opinion in support of the establishment of an international tribunal and police force.²¹⁴ Jäckh and Davies established the New Commonwealth Institute, which investigated international issues by working with an international network of personalities.²¹⁵ As the General Director of the New Commonwealth, Jäckh supervised the work of the Society and, in particular, organized its research committees.²¹⁶ The New Commonwealth provided Jäckh with a venue to continue his efforts in support of international and supra-national organizations, which he had begun more than ten year earlier as a founding member of the German League for the League of Nations.

Jäckh therefore re-affirmed European interconnectedness, as he had done in the immediate aftermath of World War One with the German League for the League of

²¹¹ Nicholas M. Butler to Julius Curtius, October 6, 1939, CEIP Records, Series VII, Box 324, Folder 4, RBML.

²¹² Julius Curtius to Fridrich Schmidt-Ott, February 14, 1940, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Schmidt-Ott, F., Nr. 956.

²¹³ Thomas B. Appleget Officer's Diary, 1934, July 17, box 13, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²¹⁴ "Our Purpose," *The New Commonwealth*, no. 2, vol. 2 (November 1933), 1, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 11, Scrapbook 19, RBML. For background on Lord David Davies see Brian Porter, "David Davies: A Hunter after Peace," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1989), 27-36.

²¹⁵ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on Conversation with Jäckh in Paris on February 10-11, 1935*, February 13, 1935, folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²¹⁶ "A Word About Ourselves," *The New Commonwealth*, no. 2, vol. 2 (November 1933), p. 2, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 11, Scrapbook 19, RBML.

Nations and in the late-1920s with the “New Germany” propaganda.²¹⁷ In an address given at several meetings of the British New Commonwealth Society in February 1933, Jäckh argued that after World War One “the world had become a unit, not a mere geographical term, but a political, economic, moral reality.” It was therefore the task of mankind to establish a “New Commonwealth,” which through an international court and an international police could solve the “ills” arising from international crises.²¹⁸ Even after the Nazi seizure of power, Germany – Jäckh optimistically argued – would pursue a policy of peace and cooperation because that was “A ‘necessity’ and a ‘law’ which none can evade when the obligation comes to exchange rhetoric for responsibility.”²¹⁹ Jäckh viewed internationalism as a tool to re-insert Germany in the international community and, in doing so, hoped to force the Nazi leadership to take political responsibility in the international arena.

In meetings with RF officers, Jäckh detailed the goals of the New Commonwealth Institute and requested financial support.²²⁰ Officers viewed the support to the New Commonwealth Institute as a way to strengthen Jäckh’s position within this institute.²²¹ Nonetheless, some officers voiced doubts not only about the “personal relationship involved” but also about the institute’s real research value.²²² In the subsequent internal

²¹⁷ To contextualize this approach in the broader context of a history of the idea of Europe see Perry Anderson, *The New Old World* (New York: Verso, 2009), 475-504.

²¹⁸ Ernst Jäckh, *Address given in London on February, 7 and 8, 1933 at meetings of the New Commonwealth*, n.d., pp. 1-2, BArch, R43-II/948.

²¹⁹ Ernst Jäckh, *The Political Situation in Germany*, Address given at Chatham House on February 6, 1933, p. 23, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²⁰ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on Conversation with Jaeckh in Paris on February 10-11, 1935*, February 13, 1935, pp. 2-3, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²¹ Tracy B. Kittredge to Edmund E. Day, June 24, 1935, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See also John Van Sickle to Tracy B. Kittredge, July 10, 1935, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²² Thomas B. Appleget, *Memorandum regarding grant for Jaeckh*, July 18, 1935, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

discussions, officers pointed to Jäckh's "extraordinary capacity as an organizer,"²²³ as well as to his peculiar position in Germany, where he was a "reasonably persona grata in German Government circles."²²⁴ Notwithstanding legitimate doubts about the grant, the majority of officers familiar with the case supported the appropriations because of the special relationship with Jäckh, who seemed to have access to Germany's political leadership. Through a series of special grants the Rockefeller Foundation complemented Jäckh's salary from 1935 to 1938.²²⁵

As had been the case during the Weimar Republic, however, the international connections between non-state actors served national goals and were part of the cultural diplomacy of Germany's political elites. The New Commonwealth was in contact with leading National Socialists,²²⁶ and Jäckh established a German Committee that was chaired by Friedrich Haselmayr (a Nazi politician and leader of the SA).²²⁷ Jäckh's ambiguous role emerged during the First New Commonwealth International Conference in Pontigny (France) in the summer of 1937. In the opening addresses, speakers contrasted individual rights in democratic societies to the all-powerful state in totalitarian systems, whereas Jäckh again stressed the interconnectedness of a post-World War One world.²²⁸ The German delegate Ottmar Bühler reported on the general interest for the German delegation, which was the only one from an "authoritarian state." He noted,

²²³ Tracy B. Kittredge to Stacy May, August 3, 1935, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²⁴ John van Sickle Officer's Diary, November 10, 1935, box 482, RG 12.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²⁵ RF 35020, Special Research Aid Grant – European Scholars, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²⁶ The New Commonwealth, An die deutschen Leser des "New Commonwealth," May, 1933, BArch, R58/6238.

²²⁷ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on Conversation with Jaeckh in Paris on February 10-11, 1935*, February 13, 1935, Folder 980, box 74, series 401S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²²⁸ The New Commonwealth, "The Pontigny Conference," *The New Commonwealth Monthly*, vol. 5, no. 12 (September, 1937), 196-200, BArch, R58/6238.

however, that questions regarding Germany's domestic policies were avoided and pointed out Jäckh's role in limiting debates on Germany's political system.²²⁹

The tension between the nationalist goals of the German Committee and the internationalist aims of the New Commonwealth eventually led to the liquidation of the German Committee. The *New Commonwealth Monthly* celebrated the speech of its new president Winston Churchill,²³⁰ who in the eyes of the German committee personified an anti-German turn of the Society.²³¹ In the following months, Albrecht von Freyberg – who had replaced Haselmayr at the head of the German committee – and Lord Davies discussed the broader goals of the New Commonwealth movement, German interests, and the nomination of Churchill and Wickham Steed to high-ranking positions in the British New Commonwealth Society.²³²

The personnel policy of the British section of the New Commonwealth Society was heavily debated in Germany,²³³ and led to both the liquidation of the German committee and the break between Lord Davies and Jäckh. The Nazi Security Service closely followed these events,²³⁴ and Jäckh's meetings with von Neurath, Schacht, and

²²⁹ Ottmar Bühler, *Bericht über meine Teilnahme an der Pontigny-Tagung des New Commonwealth vom 13. – 23. Aug. 1937*, September 19, 1937. Enclosed in Der Rektor, Westf. Wilhelms-Universität to Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung, September 25, 1937, BArch, R4901/2783.

²³⁰ The New Commonwealth, "Our Purpose," *The New Commonwealth Monthly*, vol. 5, no. 3 (December, 1936), p. 33, BArch, R58/6238.

²³¹ The New Commonwealth, Deutsches Studienkomitee, Vierteljahresbericht, no. 2/3, January, 1937, p. 3, BArch, R58/6238.

²³² Albrecht von Freyberg to David Davies, February 6, 1937, BArch, R58/6255, David Davies to Albrecht von Freyberg, March 25, 1937, BArch, R58/6255, Albrecht von Freyberg to David Davies, May 22, 1937, BArch, R58/6255, and Albrecht von Freyberg to David Davies, June 10, 1937, BArch, R58/6255.

²³³ [Walter] Hewel to Reichs- u. Preußischer Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung, December 21, 1937, p. 2, BArch, R4901/3070. See also Reichs- u. Preußischer Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung to Albrecht von Freyberg, January 8, 1938, BArch, R4901/3070 and The New Commonwealth, Deutsches Studienkomitee to Reichs- u. Preußischer Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung, January 13, 1938, BArch, R4901/3070.

²³⁴ SD-Oberabschnitt Ost to Sicherheitshauptamt, March 4, 1937, BArch, R58/6255.

Lammers became reasons of concern.²³⁵ A report by the Nazi Security Service described Jäckh as a “highly murky personality” who was “married with a Jew” and thus “certainly unqualified to defend German interests abroad.”²³⁶ The German committee had aimed to “clearly state Germany’s viewpoint on all international problems,”²³⁷ but the nomination of Churchill as head of the British Society made all forms of collaboration impossible and thus the German Committee ended its activities on June 30, 1938.²³⁸ Jäckh severed his relationship with the New Commonwealth when Lord Davies transformed the Society into a propaganda organization against the appeasement policy of the British government in the aftermath of the Munich Agreement.²³⁹ Arguing that British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had no alternative during the September crisis of 1938,²⁴⁰ Jäckh relinquished his position of Director of the International Section of the New Commonwealth, as well as of the New Commonwealth Institute.²⁴¹

The New Commonwealth Institute had embodied Jäckh’s approach, as well as his ambiguities. Jäckh used the Institute and his international connections to break Germany’s international isolation in the hope that the Nazi regime could be normalized by inserting Germany in the international community. His hopes thus met an abrupt end with the change of attitude of the British branch that also led to the closure of the German

²³⁵ Sicherheitshauptamt, Aktenvermerk. Betr. New Commonwealth, July 5, 1937, BArch, R58/6255 and Sicherheitshauptamt, Bericht: Betr. New Commonwealth, July 14, 1937, BArch, R58/6255.

²³⁶ Sicherheitshauptamt, Vermerk. Betr. Ernst Jäckh, Leiter des New Commonwealth Institutes in England, n.d. [February 1938], BArch, R58/6255.

²³⁷ Bericht: The New Commonwealth, July 1, 1937. Enclosed in Sicherheitshauptamt, Bericht: Betr. New Commonwealth, July 14, 1937, p. 2. BArch, R58/6255.

²³⁸ The New Commonwealth, Deutsches Studienkomitee, Vierteljahresbericht, Schlussbericht, June 1938, BArch, R4901/3070.

²³⁹ Tracy B. Kittredge to Stacy May, January 9, 1939, folder 941, box 104, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁰ Ernst Jäckh, “War! – War?” *The New Commonwealth Quarterly* (December 1938), p. 314, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 11, Scrapbook 19, RBML.

²⁴¹ “Ernst Jäckh,” *The New Commonwealth Quarterly*, March 1939, p. 115, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Series V, Box 11, Scrapbook 19, RBML.

section of the New Commonwealth Society. By then, however, he was not anymore a persona grata in Germany and at the same time his willingness to negotiate and readiness to compromise with the Nazi regime had tainted his international standing.

Jäckh continued his activities in exile with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation. In a typical manner, Jäckh tried to insert himself at the intersection between official policies and academic endeavors. He received a RF one-year grant of \$6,000 to study problems of regional federalism in Europe at the Geneva Graduate Institute of International Studies.²⁴² With the outbreak of the war, however, he postponed these plans and organized the South-Eastern European Section of the Ministry of Information for the British government.²⁴³ Inevitably, however, Jäckh's intermingling of research and politics created tensions within the Geneva Institute and with the RF.²⁴⁴ While the renewal of the grant was discussed,²⁴⁵ the expanding of the war forced Jäckh to flee to the United States via Portugal.²⁴⁶

Jäckh moved to the United States where he became visiting research professor at Columbia University. Here both the RF and the CEIP contributed to his stipend.²⁴⁷ Foundation officers considered financial support a moral responsibility since Jäckh had been the representative of the foundation in Berlin and thus a "certain pension protection

²⁴² Tracy B. Kittredge to Sydnor H. Walker, June 23, 1939, folder 941, box 104, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC and Tracy B. Kittredge to William E. Rappard, July 24, 1939, folder 941, box 104, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴³ Tracy B. Kittredge to Sydnor H. Walker, November 11, 1939, folder 941, box 104, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁴ William E. Rappard to Tracy B. Kittredge, May 30, 1940, folder 941, box 104, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, Tracy B. Kittredge to Joseph H. Willits and Sydnor H. Walker, May 23, 1940, folder 925, box 102, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, and Tracy B. Kittredge to William E. Rappard, May 23, 1940, folder 925, box 102, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁵ Tracy B. Kittredge to William E. Rappard, April 25, 1940, folder 925, box 102, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁶ Tracy B. Kittredge to William E. Rappard, July 30, 1940, folder 926, box 102, series 100S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁷ *Grant in Aid RA SS NO 4059*, folder 3793, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

for him is justified at this time.”²⁴⁸ Nonetheless, Joseph H. Willits, the director of the Division of the Social Sciences, described Jäckh as “long a protégé and almost equally long a concern to the RF.”²⁴⁹ In 1944, although expressing his willingness to contribute to his stipend for the third year in a row, he pointedly noted, “I see no point to our increasing the amount on the fiction that he will write another book. I don’t think his book warrants support by us, but perhaps certain pension protection is justified.”²⁵⁰ Officers were clear about the nature of the relationship with Jäckh, whose “talents lie more in the field of educational administration and public affairs than in scholarship in the narrower sense.”²⁵¹

Jäckh personifies the type of “in-between” figure at the center of this study. In the second half of the 1920s he had become the unofficial representative of the Rockefeller Foundation in Berlin and, after the Nazi seizure of power, he hoped to serve “as a middle-man between the Foundation and isolated scholars in Germany working in the field of International Relations.”²⁵² Although he always renounced an official political role, he cultivated his relationship with political elites and constructed for himself an in-between role at the intersection of a broad network of intellectuals, philanthropists, and political elites. His efforts to find a form of accommodation with the Nazi regime symbolized the weaknesses of a conception of civil society grounded in the “politics of civility.”

²⁴⁸ *Grant in aid, action no. RA SS 4410*, Folder 3794, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC. See also Joseph H. Willits to Thomas B. Appleget, August 30, 1940, Folder 3793, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁴⁹ Joseph H. Willits to Raymond B. Fosdick, May 23, 1941, Folder 3793, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁵⁰ Joseph H. Willits to Roger F. Evans, May 10, 1944, Folder 3795, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁵¹ Joseph H. Willits to Thomas B. Appleget, August 14, 1940, Folder 3793, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁵² John Van Sickle, Conversation of JVS with Dr. Jäckh, Paris July 17 and 18, 1933, July 18, 1933, p.1, Folder 178, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

Conclusion

Paradoxically, in the years of Germany's political stabilization the School of Politics underwent a series of changes that weakened the political independence of Jäckh's institute. Jäckh and his associates saw a validation of their approach rooted in the "politics of civility" in the stabilization of republican institutions. The swift collapse of the "June-Club" and the downgrading of the activities of the *Politische Kolleg* seemed to confirm this optimistic view. A rapid decline of philanthropic support to the DHfP, however, accompanied the stabilization of the Republic. After having established the School and guaranteed its survival in the first years, philanthropists withdrew their financial support in the belief that it was now the task of public agencies to support the institute.

The decrease of private financial support led to a penetration of party politics in the DHfP. These changes forced the leadership of the School of Politics to rely on public funds and, as a result, to broaden political representation within the institute. In particular, the working agreement with the PK testified not only to the penetration of party politics in the School but also to the new emphasis on cross-partisanship in order to attract public funds. This cooperation also paralleled the attempt to integrate oppositional forces into the political process in the belief that, by forcing them to share political responsibility, some of the divisions that had fragmented Germany's political society could be bridged.

Domestic stabilization also led to the increasing emphasis on foreign affairs, as the normalization of political relations made again possible a real foreign policy for German governments. Consequentially, the leadership of the DHfP emphasized

internationalism and Germany's role in an interconnected world. As discussed in the previous chapter, this internationalism had, however, a clear nationalist orientation. In a globalized world, Germany's problems influenced Europe's fate, and only by solving Germany's problems – that is, the Treaty of Versailles – Europe could be spared the fate of being the world's "beggar." This form of national internationalism facilitated the integration of conservative scholars into the DHfP.

Eventually, the normalization of political relations in the mid-1920s led to a shift in the meaning of *Überparteilichkeit*. *Überparteilichkeit* increasingly came to signify an equal representation of political parties, as the integration of conservatives in the DHfP shows. Initially, this approach pointed to the trust in political institutions' capacity to neutralize extremist political forces by involving them in the day-to-day political praxis. The integration of these oppositional political forces, however, did not always translate into an acceptance of liberal democracy. Inevitably, therefore, with the new radicalization of politics, *Überparteilichkeit* as equal presence of political parties became a void and passive form of the "politics of civility," as both tensions within the School of Politics and the gridlocked parliament showed. Against this background, nationalist internationalism provided the DHfP with a common ground and conservative scholars monopolized foreign affairs courses by the early 1930s.

The debates within the School of Politics testify to the gradual loss of trust in republican intermediary institutions' capacity to institutionalize conflict. In its last year of independent existence, the DHfP became the venue for a public debate over the limits of parliamentary democracy. Jäckh and Wolfers defended the authoritarian turn under the chancellorships of Brüning and von Papen and, in so doing, voiced the general belief that

republic institutions were unable to bridge Germany's socio-political fragmentation. As Heller clearly pinpointed, the crisis of democracy was rooted in its inability to translate social multiplicity into a minimum level of political unity. Heller's voice in defense of the Weimer Constitution was, however, a lonely one and the leadership of the DHfP turned to authoritarian solutions to Germany's crisis in the belief that a democratically elected president could preserve democracy by bypassing the conflicts of a gridlocked parliament.

Civil society and the homogenizing ideologies that gained traction in the last years of the republic were thus rooted in identical social dynamics. Jäckh and his associates believed in the possibility to reform the Weimar system with the aim, although at times ambiguous, to preserve the democratic republic. They feared that the centrifugal forces of individuation and private interest would tear apart Germany's political system. With the hardening of socio-political division, they viewed a strong head of state as the only viable alternative to the total dismantling of democratic institutions. In so doing, however, they dangerously narrowed the gap with radical authoritarian solutions to Germany's crisis, which Gleichen and the Gentlemen's Club personified. Gleichen and Schotte, as well as the circle around Spahn, called for a strong political leadership. They emphasized the contradictions between mass democracy and parliamentarism, and used Schmitt's terminology to theoretically conceptualize the end of a liberal civil society while, on a personal level, joining the National Socialist movement.

Notwithstanding the fundamental differences with the radical personalities around Gleichen and Spahn, Jäckh's attitude toward the Nazi regime remained ambiguous as long as he believed in the possibility to secure his own position in Germany. He

ambiguously negotiated with the Nazi regime in the attempt to guarantee a certain level of independence for his organizations in the months of the rapid coordination under Nazi control of all levels of organizational life. These attempts symbolized the weakness of the “politics of civility.” Jäckh made numerous concessions to the new regime in the belief that compromise could mitigate political contrasts and reduce differences. He aimed to normalize the Nazi regime by involving high-ranking officials of the new regime in these ventures and thus force them to take political responsibility – whether this was within the leading organs of the School of Politics and the research center or in transnational societies such as in the framework of the New Commonwealth movement. Eventually – as RF officers noted – Jäckh almost became an unofficial spokesperson for the regime abroad.

Since the early 1940s, Jäckh devoted much energy to portray himself as an uncompromising bulwark of liberalism during the tragic demise of the Weimar Republic. In 1943, he published a book emblematically titled *The War for Man's Soul*, which he regarded his “contribution to our war effort.”²⁵³ In this book, he not only established the narrative of his firm stand against Hitler but also condemned those personalities associated with the DHfP who compromised with Hitler (Otto Meissner and Hjalmar Schacht) and those who eventually supported the new regime such as Fritz Berber and Otto Hoeztsch.²⁵⁴

Notwithstanding these ambiguities, the Rockefeller Foundation supported Jäckh in his exile and complemented his salary first in England and then at Columbia University. The long-term relationship between the Foundation and Jäckh determined this

²⁵³ Ernst Jäckh to Raymond B. Fosdick, May 25, 1942, Folder 3794, box 319, series 200S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

²⁵⁴ Jäckh, *The War for Man's Soul*, 63-79 and 120-124.

support, rather than his abilities as a scholar, as the dashing comments on his research work show.²⁵⁵ Jäckh and his associates had become key in-between figures for the Rockefeller Foundation, as the comments on Jäckh's managerial capacities emphasized. It is therefore not surprising that these personalities were involved in the multiple projects that American philanthropic foundations supported. The School of Politics, the Abraham Lincoln Foundation, and the Stresemann Memorial Foundation testified to the emergence of a network of intellectuals who became crucial channels of communication between American philanthropic institutions and German cultural elites. American philanthropy thus guaranteed a certain level of political independence in the last, fateful years of the Weimar Republic, which was in part confirmed by Joseph Wirth's angry protests.

²⁵⁵ The Rockefeller Foundation also reserved a special treatment to Hans Simons. See Carl H. Becker to August Fehling, September 27, 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 4559, Winthrop Young to Selskar Gunn, October 10, 1932, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC, August W. Fehling to Carl H. Becker, 15 November 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 624, and Tracy B. Kittredge to John Van Sickle [cc Edmund E. Day], November 17, 1932, Folder 177, box 19, series 717S, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

CONCLUSION

This study details the development of civil society in the Weimar Republic. It serves therefore as a historical case study for an understanding of civil society's growth and eventual demise in a young, liberal republic with relatively weak democratic traditions. Against a background of crisis and dismay, civil society and philanthropy offer a good vantage point for a better understanding of the multifaceted efforts to establish democratic practices of governance in inter-war Germany, while at the same time pinpointing civil society's intrinsic inability to resist powerful, alternative forms of societal organization.

As part of the growing field of philanthropic and nonprofit studies, this study contributes to current debates focusing on the intersection of, and interrelation between civil society, philanthropy, and democracy. The relevance of this study therefore goes beyond the historical focus on inter-war Germany. While it expands the existing literature focusing on the socio-political background of civil society activities, this study's original contribution to philanthropic studies lies in proposing a new approach to the analysis of civil society in action, that is, the praxis of civil society. In doing so, it pinpoints the intrinsic weakness of civil society, thus warning against today's celebration of civil society as a panacea for all socio-political ills. Furthermore, it details the contradictory role of philanthropy in supporting a liberal civil society. In particular, the focus on the asymmetries between American ideals of democracy and the realities of German political culture draws attention to international philanthropy's dilemmas in supporting democracy and civil society.

The analysis of the thought-leaders that formed the German School of Politics and the other organizations at the center of this study contributes to some of the major debates in the field of philanthropic and nonprofit studies. The contrasting conceptions of democracy of the intellectuals at the center of this study serve as a prism for an analysis of the relationship between democracy, philanthropy, and civil society in a young liberal, republican state. In today's politicized public debates, intellectuals and scholars have either presented civil society as an alternative to the expansion of state authority or, although stressing the interconnections between civil society and state, have pointed to the primacy of state action. Consequently, they have juxtaposed state and society and sought models for the present in the past.¹

This study shows that the intellectuals that formed the circle around Ernst Jäckh viewed civil society as neither opposing government action nor depending on the state in a classical Hegelian sense. In fact, civil society provided the means to integrate all social strata into the state. Friedrich Naumann had commented on the necessity of the monarchic state to do so in the decades leading to its downfall in the fall of 1918. During the early years of the Weimar Republic, both conservative and liberal intellectuals agreed that the collapse of the old state had been rooted in its inability to integrate the working classes. Civil society represented the link between society and state, thus at times supporting and at times opposing states' actions.²

¹ On the debate see Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina, "Making Sense of the Civic Engagement Debate," in *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, edited by Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 1-26. See also Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy. From Membership to management in American Civic Life* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 2004).

² See also Bob Edwards and Michael W. Foley, "The Paradox of Civil Society," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 7, no. 3 (1996), 38-52.

Scholars' attention to civil society responds to a growing interest in democracy's preconditions. In this context, this study expands and clarifies the relationship between civil society conceptualizations and periods of societal transformations. Traditionally, scholars have viewed civil society as "a way of coping with anxieties."³ This link between civil society and anxiety was, however, centered on a negative notion of "crisis." In fact, scholars view civil society conceptualizations as a reaction to times of crisis and as an attempt to contain its side effects. Recently, however, scholars investigating philanthropic foundations' role in society have also pointed to the opportunities opened by periods of societal transformations. Political scientist Herfried Münkler argues that philanthropists established foundations in periods of societal change when it seemed possible to influence society's transformations.⁴ Likewise, David Hammack and Helmut Anheier suggest that American foundations could play an unmatched role in the first half of the twentieth century because of American society's fluidity.⁵

The intellectuals at the center of this study interpreted the crisis as a "zero hour," a tabula rasa, which required the civic and political engagement of the individual for the good of the commonality. Although grieving for the military defeat and political collapse, these intellectuals viewed philanthropy and self-organizing activities as the means to mold Germany's future form of societal organization. From this perspective, it is noteworthy that still in December 1933 the leadership of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation urged the Rockefeller Foundation not to discontinue its financial support

³ John H. Hall and Frank Trentmann, "Contests over Civil Society: Introductory Perspectives," in *Civil Society: A Reader*, edited by John H. Hall and Frank Trentmann (New York: Macmillan, 2005), 4.

⁴ Herfried Münkler, "Anstifter, Unruhestifter – wie Stiftungen Veränderungen bewegen," *Merkur*, vol. 61, no. 3 (2007), 200-209.

⁵ David C. Hammack and Helmut K. Anheier, *A Versatile American Institution. The Changing Ideals and Realities of Philanthropic Foundations* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 43-74.

because “aid for a certain number of younger men of unusual intellectual promise at the present juncture may have a quite disproportionate influence on the future trend of the present regime itself.”⁶ As a period ridden with economic, social, and political crises, the 1920s offered the tangible opportunity to influence societal transformations, thus heightening the sense of personal engagement and responsibility.

Against this background, this study takes a different approach to the analysis of civil society than most of current scholarship. It focuses on the dynamics between the actions of institutions and organizations, and the broader social behaviors that constitute public life, hence pointing to the “praxis of civil society.” On the one hand, from the investigator’s perspective, the reference to “praxis” serves to draw attention to an empirical investigation of socio-political actions that is informed by civil society theory. On the other hand, however, the “praxis of civil society” refers to the conscious effort of the intellectuals at the center of this study to combine practice and theory.

This study uses as a prism the activities of a circle of German public intellectuals who in the 1920s were strategically placed at the intersection between the spheres of action of philanthropists, theorists and academics, and political elites. Although not original scholars or theorists, these intellectuals played a central role in Germany’s public sphere. In the period covered by this study, Ernst Jäckh epitomized this type of in-between figure. Colleagues, American foundation officers, and the press repeatedly characterized Jäckh as the “manager” and “organizer,” while his scholarly contributions were often dismissed. Similarly, most of these intellectuals interpreted unfolding events by simplifying complex theoretical constructs developed by those theorists who find a

⁶ Tracy B. Kittredge, *Memorandum on conversation with Dr. Fehling*, December 12, 1933, folder 159, box 17, series 717R, RG 1.1, RF Archives, RAC.

place in today's histories of intellectual thought but whose public influence at the time was – with few exceptions – limited.

Indeed, these public intellectuals played a crucial role in those years because of their capacity to carve out a room of maneuver at the intersection of private and public initiatives. In the fluid and crisis-ridden first German democracy, extra-political initiatives offered previously unavailable opportunities to influence both the nascent German state and its form of societal organization. In this context, voluntary organizations and philanthropic institutions provided these intellectuals with the possibility to work with political elites while maintaining a certain level of independence both from political parties and the shifting moods of the masses. Between 1920 and 1933, the German School of Politics, the Gustav Stresemann Memorial, and the Abraham Lincoln Foundation seemed to provide the means to influence Germany's political future and mold a new, democratic German society.

The analysis of these intellectuals' activities during World War One shows how they grew dissatisfied with a narrow definition of civil society, which gradually came to encompass more than the concept of self-organization. Influenced by Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, most of today's scholarship on civil society focuses on voluntary associations.⁷ As part of the booming field of philanthropic and nonprofit studies, this emphasis on organizational structures is part of attempts to measure nationally and compare internationally the size of civil society, which scholars often equated to the nonprofit sector.⁸ In addition, including hardly quantifiable data on

⁷ This approach has been popularized by Putnam, *Bowling Alone* and Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*.

⁸ See for example the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project by the Center for Civil Society Studies at the John Hopkins Institute for Health and Social Policy (<http://ccss.jhu.edu/research-projects/comparative->

civil society's normative dimension in these quantitative analyses has presented an almost insurmountable challenge.⁹

During World War One, German intellectuals viewed associations as able to bridge socio-political divides by cultivating an apolitical sociability. The cases of "German Society 1914," the "Wednesday-Society," and the "Free Patriotic Union" testified to German elites' attempt to establish venues for a free exchange of ideas and for a social intercourse that was unhindered by considerations of rank, status, and political orientation. The architects of these organizations believed that through the day-to-day interactions with political opponents a sort of spontaneous sociability would arise and instill in members a culture of compromise, that is, Tocqueville's "self-interest properly understood."

German intellectuals soon lost their faith in associations' ability to bridge Germany's inner divisions. In truth, since their inceptions, these associations had relied on the coagulating power of nationalism, which the outbreak of the war in August 1914 had inflamed. Similarly, these elites could momentarily revive cross-partisan organizations in the winter of 1918-19 only against the background of the Bolshevik and Spartacist threat. Associations appeared therefore as viable means to unify Germans only if supported by powerful integrating ideologies. Emblematically, therefore, the intellectuals at the center of this study did not comment on the decision of a Special

nonprofit-sector). See also Lester Salamon, "Putting the Civil Society Sector on the Economic Map of the World," *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, vol. 81, no. 2 (2010), 167-210.

⁹ See for example the methodological and theoretical framework developed by Helmut K. Anheier, "The Civil Society Diamond: The Basics," in *Nonprofit Organizations: Theory, Management and Policy*, edited by Helmut K. Anheier (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14-42. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index has adopted this approach (<https://civicus.org/csi/>), although with some problems. See Gerard Clarke, "Civil Society, Cross-National Comparison and the Problem of Statistical Capture," *Journal of International Development*, vol. 23, no. 7 (2011), 959-979. For a different approach see the research based on data from the World Values Survey (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>).

Members' Assembly to revamp the "German Society 1914" in 1932 because, by not being supported by any strong integrative ideology, it appeared inadequate to the crisis of the times.¹⁰ The case of associational life in interwar Germany shows that, without a set of civic values or the backing of a powerful integrative ideology, voluntary organizations alone could not support the development of democratic practices of governance.¹¹

These intellectuals sought other means to counter German society's fragmentation. Consequently, they developed a conception of civil society that, by being grounded in civility, could retie social bonds and counter the brutalization of politics characteristic of the post-World War One years. The "politics of civility" was based on the recognition that conflicts between multiple socio-political interests were unavoidable in a modern society. Thus, it was grounded in an ethos that viewed the political enemy as an opponent with an equal right to participate in the political process. The German School of Politics therefore serves as an example for an attempt to build civil society by teaching the practice of civility. The focus on the "politics of civility" helps to clarify civil society's boundaries, as scholars still debate the distinction between an allegedly good and bad civil society,¹² as well as on its moral or ethical dimension.¹³

The focus on civility allows a distinction from what may be called an "un-civil society." The case of the circle that gradually formed around the Gleichen, Moeller-Bruck, and (at the beginning) Stadtler shows how, by resorting to a religious vision of politics and at times violent means to foster their political, economic and cultural/moral

¹⁰ Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, Circular Letter to Members, January 1, 1932, GStA PK, VI. HA NI Becker, C. H., Nr. 186.

¹¹ This study therefore expands Sheri Berman's work. Berman, "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," 401-429.

¹² Chambers and Kopstein, "Bad Civil Society," 837-865.

¹³ Don Eberly, "Civic renewal vs. moral renewal," *Policy Review*, issue 91 (1998), 44-47.

goals, certain groups may disqualify themselves from the civil society family, although relying on associational networks and voluntary forms of self-organization. Scholars have defined such groups as “segmented societies,”¹⁴ or have viewed them as characterized by high levels of “bonding social capital.”¹⁵ Crucially, these groups place themselves outside the public sphere, thus refusing to participate in the free exchange of rational arguments. They denied equal right of existence to political opponents, and rather aimed for their complete defeat, or even physical elimination. In doing so, they consciously dismissed the notion of civility, as it assumed the acceptance of the liberal political system.

These public intellectuals therefore represented the transmission belt between a conception of civil society centered on the notion of civility and practical experimentations aiming to transform these visions of a civil society into reality. Research on civil society has disproportionally focused either on civil society’s associational structures or on the great political theorists who are part of civil society’s intellectual history. The case of the circle that gradually formed around Jäckh shows that an analysis of civil society that goes beyond the intrinsic limitations of current scholarship should focus on such in-between figures. In so doing, scholars can detail the praxis of civil society, that is, a social practice and action for the common good that is informed by theoretical reflection.

The intrinsic weakness of civil society is rooted in the paradoxical modernity of civil society itself. In fact, as a political concept that is part of modernity, civil society is not only the precondition for democracy but is also one for the homogenizing ideologies that have dominated the twentieth century. Civil society is grounded in the processes of

¹⁴ Letizia Paoli, “Crime, Italian Style,” *Daedalus*, vol. 130, no. 3 (2001), 157-185.

¹⁵ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

individuation characteristic of modernization, that is, the transformation of traditional societies based on ascribed identities to commercial and industrial ones characterized by achieved identities. As a modern phenomenon, civil society recognizes the existence of conflicts in society, it accepts and even encourages them. This process is part of the gradual formation of an individual who is able to break the ascribed boundaries to human action. This multiplicity of conflicts can be negotiated, however, only on the basis of a common ground established by the “politics of civility.” Without a set of shared civic values, the multiplicity of interests risks tearing society apart. As “Chapter 6” has shown, the inability to bridge these conflicting interests increased the attractiveness of homogenizing ideologies that sought allegedly pre-political forms of unity able to transcend societal divides.

The Weimar Republic represents the case *par excellence* of a society unable to harmonize the internal fragmentations that the widening of the public sphere had caused. The progressive exclusion of an “outcast civil society” from a “respectable civil society” became paradigmatic of the effects of exclusion on the development of a democratic public space.¹⁶ Either part or outside the public space, “outcast civil society” appeared to challenge the stability of both society and its institutional supportive framework. Emblematically, even Theodor Heuss supported the 1926 Law to Protect Youth from Trashy and Filthy Writings, which attempted to shield the public from obscenity and indecency.¹⁷ National Socialism also profited from the perceived moral collapse of

¹⁶ Julia Roos, “Prostitutes, Civil Society, and the State in Weimar Germany,” in *Paradoxes of Civil Society. New Perspectives on Modern German and British History*, edited by Frank Trentmann, revised edition (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 263-280.

¹⁷ Klaus Petersen, “The Harmful Publications (Young Persons) Act of 1926: Literary Censorship and the Politics of Morality in the Weimar Republic,” *German Studies Review*, vol. 15, no. 3 (1992), 505-523 and Margaret F. Stieg, “The 1926 German Law to Protect Youth against Trash and Dirt: Moral Protectionism in a Democracy,” *Central European History*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1990), 22-56.

bourgeois society, as Weimar's greatest achievements and freedoms came to be deeply contested. The National Socialist regime organized German society around the principles of inclusion and exclusion and re-established those traditional values that democracy, identified with the disruptive forces of modernization and urbanization, had destroyed.¹⁸

The demise of Weimar civil society thus points to civil society's peculiar nature. In fact, civil society is a lukewarm concept. It is based on willingness to negotiate, readiness to compromise, acceptance of differences, and openness to rational argumentation. As Ralf Dahrendorf noted in regard to the European revolutions that ended Communist regimes in East Europe,

It can take six months to create new political institutions, to write a constitution and electoral laws. It may take six years to create a halfway viable economy. It will probably take sixty years to create a civil society.¹⁹

Paradoxically, civil society's strength derives from its relentless slowness. Civil society does not produce swift and radical political changes, but rather contributes to the gradual deterioration of the edifice of political authority and its supporting ideologies in what Antonio Gramsci famously characterized as a "war of position."²⁰ Emblematically, the leadership of the DHfP had trusted in political processes' power to neutralize, and thus integrate, extra-parliamentary forces into the system. The threat to the republican system

¹⁸ See David Welch, "Nazi Propaganda and the Volksgemeinschaft: Constructing a People's Community," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2004), 213-238. "Asocial" and "degenerate" elements could not fit the "people's community." After 1933, workhouses, relatively empty during the Weimar Republic, were filled with social outcasts and motherhood became the basis of the new "people's community." Stephenson, "Inclusion," in *Nazi Germany*, 26-47 and Nikolaus Wachsmann, "The policy of exclusion: repression in the Nazi state," in *Nazi Germany*, edited by Jane Caplan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 122-145.

¹⁹ Ralf Dahrendorf, *Reflections on the Revolutions in Europe* (London: Chatto and Winds, 1990), 93.

²⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader. Selected Writings 1916-1935* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 225-230.

came, however, from political forces that rejected the premises of the liberal system and used the participation in the political process to overthrow the political system itself.

The organizations at the center of this study serve as examples for a better understanding of the political role of philanthropy in a democratic state. Current public debates often de-politicize philanthropy and assigned to it an economic, charitable, and ethic-moral value. As the case of Robert Bosch shows, however, philanthropy became a form of political engagement and an act of taking political responsibility. Many of the projects and organizations described in “Chapter 2” were possible because of Bosch’s support. Conversely, Bosch sealed the fate of the “National Union for Freedom and Fatherland” when he withdrew his financial support to the organization. Scholars should therefore consider philanthropy and voluntary organizations major ways in which individuals participate in democracy.

By supporting voluntary and private organizations, however, philanthropy also guarantees the existence of extra-political or nonpolitical avenues for political participation. This study shows that private philanthropy guaranteed the political independence of the German School of Politics, which was able to play a crucial role at the intersection of private and public initiatives as long as it remained free of the contrasting political influences. Philanthropy thus supports the developments of a diverse set of avenues that allowed for forms of civic participation and political engagement in periods of societal crisis and transformation.

Conversely, however, philanthropy may also foster specific political interests, and be used to co-opt organizations and institutions to pursue such goals. Alfred Hugenberg used his philanthropies to support and expand his political influence. He had attempted to

gain control of the School of Politics through a financial contribution that would have covered 51% of the budget of Jäckh's institute. After the failure of this project, through Hugenberg's substantial support, the *Politische Kolleg* moved away from its initial nonpartisanship to a close alignment to the DNVP, thus leading to the rupture with Gleichen. By the mid-1920s, the PK had become Hugenberg's creature, and was drastically re-dimensioned with the falling of his financial support. Emblematically, therefore, reduced to only three members, it would cease its activities in 1935 after the brief cooperation with the DHfP.²¹ Just as it could guarantee political independence, philanthropy was also a form of political patronage, thus dismissing easy conclusion in regard to its intrinsic benefit to society and political neutrality.

The relationship between the leadership of the School of Politics and American philanthropic foundations serves as a historical case study for the understanding of the development of an international civil society. Transnational civil society and its actors have often been criticized. Historians and sociologists have used Gramscian and Foucaultian paradigms to analyze the impact of philanthropic foundations and to point to the power dynamics that develop between grantor and grantee.²² Similarly, over the last decade, scholars have debated the real impact of international aid and humanitarianism, and pointed to harmful effects of international organizations on economic and political development.²³ Whether we accept these critics or not, these post-colonial and post-modernist approaches undoubtedly have the merit to draw attention to the critical encounters between local and international actors.

²¹ [?] Dittler to Amtsgericht Charlottenburg, August 1, 1935, Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 042, Nr. 8993.

²² As a recent example see Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*.

²³ See Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why aid is not working and how there is another way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009) and, from a broader perspective, Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

The relationship between the School of Politics, as well as of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation and the Gustav Stresemann Memorial, with U.S. foundations was, however, complex and not an exclusively bilateral process. Philanthropic relationships do not develop in a historical, political, and social vacuum. Rather, disturbing factors must be taken into account. Indeed, the noteworthy influence of German advisors to U.S. foundations and the key role of Germany's political elites, particularly of Carl H. Becker, complicated this relationship. As discussed in "Chapter 5," the Special Correspondents for Germany of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace had a clear political agenda, which in the case of Friedrich W. Foerster and Hellmut von Gerlach contrasted while in the case of Erich von Prittwitz und Gaffron overlapped the one of Germany's political elites. Philanthropic foundations and international philanthropy must thus be seen at the center of a complex cultural diplomacy, which served a broader circle of interests than those of donors and recipients.

This historical case study serves as an example for a better understanding of the political dimension of international philanthropy. As noted above, scholars have detailed the negative and counterproductive impact of international aid and philanthropy on the development of receiving countries. Furthermore, historians have pinpointed the close cooperation between American foundations and official U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War period.²⁴ Philanthropic institutions can serve as conduits for an unofficial foreign

²⁴ Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe*, Kai Bird, *The Chairman*. John J. McCloy, *the Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), Pierre Gremion, "The Partnership between the Ford Foundation and the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Europe," in *The Ford Foundation and Europe (1950's-1970's)*. *Cross-fertilization of Learning in Social Science and Management*, edited by Giuliana Gemelli (Brussels: Peter Lang, 1998), 137-164, and Oliver Schmidt, "Networks of Patronage: American Foundations and the Origins of the Salzburg Seminar," in *American Foundations in Europe*, 145-166.

policy, and in this the United States is not an isolated case.²⁵ Without doubts, both the CEIP and Rockefeller philanthropic institutions were central actors of an American cultural diplomacy in inter-war Germany. German intellectuals and elites were, however, well aware of the semi-official political role of foundation officials and trustees. Consequently, these relationships should be viewed as complex interactions, which often served German actors' (national) agenda.

Indeed, a clear asymmetry developed around the meanings, goals, and understandings of internationalism. U.S. foundations had aimed to fight European elites' parochialism by facilitating international encounters and trans-national cooperative endeavors. Jäckh and his associates, however, viewed internationalism and the prestigious relationship with international organizations as both a personal asset and a tool to break Germany's international isolation. In the eyes of the School of Politics' leadership, the relationship with U.S. foundations served multiple purposes, which only in part overlapped those of American foundation officers. In truth, U.S. foundations were aware of the difficulties in selecting local partner organizations and trust persons. Paradoxically, in fact, the democratic credentials of Foerster and Gerlach had hindered rather than helped the work of the CEIP in Germany. Jäckh's cautious mix of liberalism and nationalism made him an ideal contact person for American foundations. Foundations sought out organizations and individuals that, by being politically connected, could enhance the impact of programs, although at the same time automatically

²⁵ See for example Dorota Dakowska, "German Political Foundations: Transnational party go-betweens in the process of EU enlargement," in *Transnational European Union*, edited by Wolfram Kaiser and Peter Starie (London: Routledge, 2005), 150-169, Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, "Foreign Political Aid: The German Political Foundations and Their US Counterparts," *International Affairs*, vol. 67, no. 1 (1991), 33-63, and James M. Scott, "Transnationalizing democracy promotion: The role of Western political foundations and think-tanks," *Democratization*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1999), 146-170.

multiplying the interests at stake. Conversely, this alignment to political elites also opened the door to risky ambivalences and ambiguities.

The analysis of the relationship between the German School of Politics and Rockefeller philanthropic institutions details international philanthropy's unintended negative impact. Although RF officers recognized that the School's relevance lied in its efforts to instill a culture of civility in its students, in line with the goals of the RF, they attempted to develop its research-oriented programs. Thus, a second basic asymmetry developed around the relationship between objectivity and democracy. The progressivist faith that had provided the background to the establishment of large, multi-purpose American foundations had influenced American elites' trust in the possibility to form a culture of the expert, who could bypass contentious politics by relying on objective social and economic research. By contrast, Jäckh and his associates were convinced that political processes could not be de-politicized, thus believing in the possibility to teach the objective working of democratic, political institutions, which then could provide the common ground on which political contrasts could be negotiated.

This asymmetry was, however, not confined to a difference of priorities. Rather, the School's leadership's emphasis on the "politics of civility" responded to the awareness that civicism, democratic values, and sense of political responsibility (in short, a civic religion) were the *conditio sine qua non* for any effective public policy in a young republican state with relatively weak democratic traditions. In fact, core values, such as liberty and equality, and the political systems that were grounded in them, such as democracy, could have radically different meanings, as the discussion of the contrasting understandings of democracy in "Chapter 3" has shown. The development of an objective

public policy then requires a set of shared civic values. The goal of the School of Politics' pedagogical view of politics was to instill such a civic religion through the teaching of the objective working of political institutions and processes.

The acrimonious debates between the leadership of the DHfP and the founders of the *Politische Kolleg* point to the intrinsic dangers of a culture of experts and policy-makers in the absence of a set of shared civic values. The intellectual thought of Heinrich von Gleichen shows how the invocation of the "expert" was often only the first step of a celebration of social and political elites, whose expertise served to set them apart from the "masses" and enabled them to govern free of liberal republican institutions' political constraints. The celebration of both the expert and objective political research could serve to by-pass liberal intermediary institutions that guaranteed political pluralism, thus responding to an understanding of democracy that was based on an organic unity and stratification of the national body (rather than on the existence of a multiplicity of individualities, and thus of interests). In addition, the culture of experts and objective public policy could easily be used to foster specific interest under the guise of an alleged nonpartisan pursuit of the common good.

The focus on the praxis of civil society has pointed to civil society's ambiguous modernity. The lessons of Weimar go beyond recognizing the "dark side" of social capital and civic associations,²⁶ or pointing to associational life's democratic "neutrality."²⁷ Civil society's inability to bridge societal conflicting interests by establishing a set of civic values, the "politics of civility," questions its capacity of

²⁶ Shanker Satyanath, Nico Voigtländer, and Hans-Joachim Voth, "Bowling for Fascism: Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party in Weimar Germany, 1919-33," *NBER Working Papers*, no. 19201 (2013).

²⁷ Omar G. Encarnacion, "Tocqueville's Missionaries. Civil Society Advocacy and Promotion of Democracy," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2000), 9-18.

growth in heterogeneous societies that are unable to find a common ground on which differences can be negotiated and solved by compromise.

This weakness of democracy and civil society has led to conceptions of a “vigilant democracy” (*Wehrhafte Demokratie*), which found its full embodiment in the German Federal Republic. The German émigré and political philosopher Karl Loewenstein argued in two essays published in the *American Political Science Review* in the late 1930s that fascism was a political technique “for gaining and holding power,” thus concluding that “If democracy is convinced that it has not yet fulfilled its destination, it must fight on its own plane a technique which serves only the purpose of power. Democracy must become militant.”²⁸ In fact, the German case had shown that Fascist and Nazi groups could seize power by misusing the extraordinary circumstances created by democratic tolerance and only formally adhering to democracy’s rigid legalism. While Germany remains the best example of a “militant democracy,” scholars have described the development of multiple mechanisms to protect the democratic system.²⁹

The awareness of democracy’s intrinsic weakness and the necessity to protect it, however, were not a post-World War Two novelty. Already during the constitutional debates of 1919, Max Weber and Friedrich Meinecke had supported the establishment of a head of state with broad political powers. The Weimar Constitution had included Article 48, which granted to the Reich President extraordinary emergency powers, which

²⁸ Karl Loewenstein, “Militant Democracy and Fundamental Rights, I,” *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1937), 423. The second essay is Karl Loewenstein, “Militant Democracy and Fundamental Rights, II,” *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 31, no. 4 (1937), 638-658.

²⁹ Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, John Keane, *The Life and Death of Democracy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), and Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen: A History of American CIVIC Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

Weimar governments repeatedly used. In 1922, the Law for the Protection of the Republic also provided the state with an additional tool to resist the violent attempts to overthrow the republic. Nonetheless, between 1930 and 1933, conservative elites effectively used Article 48 to transform Germany's parliamentary republic into an authoritarian plebiscitary democracy. Paradoxically, therefore, the tools that had been set in place to defend democracy contributed to its eventual downfall.

Any investigation of civil society's development during the Weimar Republic is, to a certain extent, paradoxical in itself. In fact, the history of Weimar's civil society is a history with a well-known end. Germany's first democracy was unable to develop strong roots in a socially, as well as politically, fragmented society, and thus could not integrate all sections of society into the new political system. Civil society represents the link between politics and society. In other words, civil society is the transmission belt between social dynamics and political institutions, and its failure of doing so explains Weimar's collapse. While associational networks can provide individuals with extra-political opportunities of political engagement, the "politics of civility" plays the crucial role of establishing, maintaining, and strengthening the connection between society and politics. As Jürgen Kocka has written, therefore, civil society is a "utopia," a promise that will never be fully fulfilled.³⁰ Civil society, as a form of socio-political action (that is, the "politics of civility"), is the precondition for the good working of the democratic system.

The intellectuals at the center of this study fluctuated between high hopes in the democratic state and disillusion with liberal institutions' working. In doing so, they epitomized democracy's wavering in inter-war Germany. The German School of Politics

³⁰ Jürgen Kocka, "Zivilgesellschaft in Historischer Perspektive," *Forschungsjournal NSB*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2003), 33.

was thus in many ways an emblem of Weimar's young democracy. Notwithstanding its failure, the School of Politics also indicates the possibility to teach and learn the "politics of civility," as its ability to contain violent clashes between its students has shown. In this context, private philanthropy provided the School's leadership with a remarkable freedom of maneuver, whose importance was evidenced by the negative impact of the School of Politics' politicization after the falling of private donations in the late 1920s. The Weimar Republic thus testifies to the constantly unfinished nature of the civil society project.

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Zunz, Olivier. *Why the American Century?* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Peter C. Weber

EDUCATION

Indiana University

2008—2014

Ph.D. in Philanthropic Studies; Minor: German History

Dissertation Title: The Praxis of Civil Society: Associational Life, the Politics of Civility, and Public Affairs in the Weimar Republic.

Dissertation Committee: Prof. Gregory Witkowski (Chair), Prof. Dwight Burlingame, Prof. Kevin Cramer, Prof. Giuliana Gemelli, and Prof. Leslie Lenkowsky.

University of Bologna, Italy

Master in International Studies in Philanthropic

2006—2007

Thesis: “Terrorism and Philanthropy. The American Non Profit Sector and the Global War on Terrorism Financing.”

Advisors: Prof. Leslie Lenkowsky and Prof. Valerio Marchetti.

Laurea Vecchio Ordinamento (B.A. and M.A.) in History

2000—2005

HONORS AND AWARDS

2014 IUPUI Chancellor’s Scholar

Spring 2014

Indiana University Graduate School

This prestigious campus-wide honor is based on an evaluation of my academic achievements to date and contributions to philanthropic studies in terms of teaching, research, and service.

ARNOVA Emerging Scholars Award

Fall 2013

Awarded: \$1,200

This award from the leading scholarly association in the field of philanthropic studies is based on an evaluation of my work to date and potential to have an impact in the field.

Qualifying Examination with Honors

Spring 2011

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

I passed with honors the qualifying examination of the Ph.D. program in philanthropic studies in the fields of philanthropic studies, ethics and philanthropy, and German history.

Summa cum Laude and Right of Publication

Summer 2005

Department of History and Cultures, University of Bologna

The examination committee awarded the summa cum laude and the right of publication to my M.A. thesis.

PUBLICATIONS

“The Paradoxical Modernity of Civil Society: the Weimar Republic, Democracy, and Social Homogeneity.” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*. OnlineFirst, March 8, 2014.

“Ethnic Identity during War: The Case of German-American Societies during World War I.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1 (2014), 185-206.

“Modernity, Civil Society, and Sectarianism: The Muslim Brotherhood and the Takfir Groups.” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2013), 509-527.

SUBMITTED AND WORKING PAPERS

“The Praxis of Civil Society. The Politics of Civility, Public Affairs, and Philanthropy in the Weimar Republic.” The article is part of a volume edited by Gregory Witkowski and Arnd Bauerkämper, which is currently under review for publication.

“The Pacifism of Andrew Carnegie and Edwin Ginn: The Making of a Philanthropic Internationalism.” Submitted to *Peace & Change*.

“Terrorism and Philanthropy. Counter Terrorism Financing Regimes, International Civil Society, and Religious Fundamentalism.” In *ISTR Conference Working Paper Volume*, 2008.

“Philanthropic Studies as Liberal Arts Education.” In preparation for submission to the *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*. Co-authored with Gregory Witkowski.

“The Impact of 9/11 on Muslim American Donations: The role of trust and confidence.” In preparation for submission to the *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Co-authored with Sindhu Raghavan.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

P523/V523: Civil Society and Philanthropy 2010, 2011, 2012
This course is cross-listed with the IUPUI School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) as “Civil Society and Public Policy.”

P524/V524: Civil Society in Comparative Perspective 2011, 2012
This course is cross-listed with the IUPUI School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA).

P523: Civil Society and Philanthropy (Online) 2014

P201: Introduction to Philanthropic Studies 2014

GRANTS

Max Kade Institute Fellowship Total awarded: \$30,000	2009/10; 2010/11; 2013/14
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy Graduate Student Research Grant Awarded: \$1,000	Fall 2013
The Dickinson-Stone-Ilchman Fellowship for Graduate Education Awarded: \$5,000	Fall 2013
IU-OVPIA Free University of Berlin Exchange Awarded: One year with EUR 14,000; Accepted: One semester with EUR 7,000	Spring 2013
Rockefeller Archive Center Grant-in-Aid Awarded: \$1,000	Spring 2013
Center on Philanthropy Travel Grant Awarded: \$800	Summer 2012
Teaching Assistantship, IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy Total awarded: \$30,000	2010/11—2012
IUPUI Graduate School Travel Grant Awarded: \$500	Summer 2011
IUPUI Graduate School Travel Grant Awarded: \$800	Summer 2010
Graduate Assistantship, Lake Institute on Faith and Giving at IUPUI Total awarded: \$24,000	2008—2010
ZEIT-Stiftung Fellowship Awarded: EUR 12,000	2006—2007

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Conceptualizing Global Civil Society in Inter-War Europe: The Nationalist Goals of Internationalism.” 2014 ISTR 11th International Conference, Münster, Germany.

“Panel 3: Changing the Landscape of Debate: Foundations and Education after Crises.” 2014 Conference on “U.S. and European Philanthropy in Europe after 1945. Historical Research and the Role of Foundations.” Berlin, Germany.

“Panel 4: Archives and Documentation in an Age of E-mail.” 2014 Conference on “U.S. and European Philanthropy in Europe after 1945. Historical Research and the Role of Foundations.” Berlin, Germany.

“Associational life in an era of political turbulence: German political clubs in World War One and the limits of Tocquevillian civil society.” 2013 ARNOVA Conference, Hartford, United States.

“American Philanthropic Foundations in Weimar Germany: Asymmetries and Misunderstandings.” 2013 ARNOVA Conference, Hartford, United States.

“Higher Education and the Public Sphere: The ‘German College of Politics’ and Civil Discourse in the Weimar Republic.” 2012 ARNOVA Conference, Indianapolis, United States.

“Conceptions of Civil Society in the Weimar Republic.” 2012 Conference on “German Philanthropy in Transatlantic Perspective,” Indianapolis, United States.

“Civil Society and International Philanthropy in the Weimar Republic: The Deutsche Hochschule für Politik and American Philanthropic Foundations.” 2012 ISTR 10th International Conference, Siena, Italy.

“The Limits of Private Philanthropy: The Pacifism of Edwin Ginn and Andrew Carnegie.” 2011 ARNOVA Conference, Toronto, Canada.

“Islamic terrorism and Mafia-kind organizations. Extreme examples of social entrepreneurship?” 2010 Nitte International Conference, India. Co-authored with Paolo Palenzona.

“Civil Society as a metaphor of the ‘Good Society.’ The limits of a normative concept and the case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.” 2010 ISTR 9th International Conference, Istanbul, Turkey.

“American philanthropic foundations and the Weimar Republic. First hesitant steps toward a global civil society?” 2010 ISTR 9th International Conference, Istanbul, Turkey.

“The Turnverein in Indianapolis and the Impact of the Great War: German-Americans Toward Integration in American Society.” 2010 SGAS Symposium, New Harmony, Indiana, United States.

“The Deutsche Hochschule für Politik and American Philanthropic Foundations: The Weimar Republic between Fragmentation and Unity.” 2010 SGAS Symposium, New Harmony, Indiana, United States.

“Terrorism and Philanthropy. Counter Terrorism Financing Regimes, International Civil Society, and Religious Fundamentalism.” 2008 ISTR 8th International Conference, Barcelona, Spain.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

“Conference report: German Philanthropy in Transatlantic Perspective, 09/30/2012-10/02/2012, Indianapolis, IN.” *H-Soz-u-Kult*, 02/02/2013, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=4653>

“Conference report: German-Italian Conference on Community Foundations, January 16-18, 2006.” organized by the Maecenata Institut and the Fondazione Cariplo. Villa Vigoni (Como), Italy

“Research Report: U.S. Foundations in Weimar Germany: Asymmetries and Misunderstandings.” *Rockefeller Archive Center Research Reports Online*, 2013, <http://www.rockarch.org/publications/resrep/>

SERVICE

Co-developer of H-Net Associations and Philanthropic Studies 2013—present

ARNOVA Values, Religion, Altruism, and Drawbacks Section (VRADS) 2013—present

Co-director of Workshop in Multidisciplinary Philanthropic Studies 2010—present
Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Undergraduate Faculty Learning Community 2010—present
Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Research Assistant 2007—2010
Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Student Orientation
Academic Department, Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Reviewer 2009
Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly

MEMBERSHIP

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)	2011—present
International Society for Third Sector Research	2008—present
H-Net German	2009—present
H-Net Soz-U-Kult	2013—present
ARNOVA Values, Religion, Altruism, and Drawbacks Section (VRADS)	2013—present

LANGUAGES

English – speak fluently and read/write with high proficiency

Italian – speak fluently and read/write with high proficiency

German – Native speaker

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Friedrich-Meinecke-Institute, Free University, Berlin, Germany 2013
Visiting Researcher

European Union-United States Atlantis Program 2007—2008
Researcher for the Benchmarking NonProfit Organizations and Philanthropy Educational Programs (BENPHE) Project

University of Bologna 2007—2008
Research fellow at the Master in International Studies in Philanthropy

ZEIT-Stiftung, Hamburg, Germany Fall 2006
Intern